

New York Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS
AND SUMMER DAYS.

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Vol. VI.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,
PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, JULY 10, 1875.

TERMS IN ADVANCE (One copy, four months, \$1.00.
One copy, one year, \$2.00.
Two copies, one year, \$3.00.)

No. 278.

YELLOWSTONE JACK; OR, The Trappers of the Enchanted Ground.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
Author of "Old Bull's-eye, the Lightning Shot of the Plains."

CHAPTER I. THE POUDEREE.

"It's no use—in less'n three shakes we'll ketch it, hot an' heavy!"

"But, Harris, we must reach the shelter of the rocks. Look yonder—'tis a hurricane! It will be death to meet it here, unprotected. Look beyond the point—see! the trees uprooted, the very rocks carried like feathers before the blast! On—whip up there—it's life or death now, boys!"

"Mules is poor critters to buck ag'inst the wind in a race, boss—but hev it so, though I 'vise ye to turn the critters head in, like a coral, sorter. That'll be the devil an' all to pay when the animiles feel the fust lick—they'll stampede, shore!"

"Too late—we haven't time—our only chance is the rocks yonder. Maynard—look to the democrat—push on ahead and save the girls—quick!"

With hoarse shouts, angry curses and imprecations, mingled with and given force by the stinging "blacksnake," the sharp crack of which echoed from side to side of Shichachetish pass, the teamsters urged on their snorting, terrified mules, passing not to pick the smoothest way, but bounding recklessly over the boulders that thickly strewed the level bottom, often threatening to overturn the unwieldy wagon, thinking only of gaining the haven of safety beneath the overhanging cliff beyond the mouth of the pass.

Of the six vehicles, five were huge, clumsy, deep-bedded wagons—true "prairie schooners"—heavily loaded, drawn each by six stout mules. Their drivers, each bestriding his "near-wheeler," plied tongue, spurs and whip without cessation. Other men ran alongside, flogging the bewildered animals, pricking them with knives until their sides and haunches were washed with blood.

The sixth vehicle—that which the "boss" had called a "democrat"—was a light, four-wheeled spring wagon, with oil-cloth cover, drawn by two stylish horses. The driver, a fiery-crested little fellow, evidently had his hands full, though manfully struggling to bring the maddened animals under control. The unusual noise and confusion had so alarmed them that the utmost endeavors of Terrence McCarthy only served to keep their heads directed toward the overhanging cliff beyond. The light vehicle bounded over the rough boulders, swaying frightfully, and the hard-mouthed animals threatened to draw Terrence over the low dash-board.

Shichachetish pass or canon, as it might almost as well be termed, closely resembles a gigantic letter Y, with its base pointing nearly due west. Upon either hand, divided by nearly one hundred feet of chalky soil, thickly strewn with boulders of various sizes and shapes that had fallen from the sides of the pass, rose abruptly the walls of the canon, in a series of gigantic steps or plateaus. The first and largest step was considerably over a hundred feet in height, clear-cut and perpendicular, so smooth and regular that a cat could not have scaled it, unless aided by the scanty, straggling growth of parasitic plants that clung to the face of the chalky rock. Above this rose another and another step, until the top, where a dense growth of scrubby pines, cedars and pines crowned the ridge. The base of the Y is some two miles in length; the arms, a trifle longer. The lower branch—or the one tending to the north-west—was the one along which the emigrants had wound.

An hour previously, the day had been all that is expected of latter June; clear, warm, and inspiring. But there came a sudden change. The sky darkened, the sunshine assumed a blood-red tinge, the air suddenly died away to almost suffocating stillness. Men and cattle felt oppressed. They breathed with difficulty. They felt as though scorched. And yet their skins were dry and parched. The searing atmosphere prevented perspiration. Instead of being among the mountains, where their yearning gaze could even then rest upon masses of cooling snow, they seemed to be in the midst of a desert, beneath the simoom's withering breath.

Bob Harris, an old trapper who had been picked up by the way, wounded, almost starving, though he had managed to escape with his scalp from the Blackfeet who had robbed him of animals, traps and peltries, told John Warren that he believed a storm—the terrible *pouderet*—was brewing. The guide, Chris Camp,

* Literally, "Bad Wolf," though why so called, I do not know.

† I spell this as it is pronounced; whether correctly or not, I do not know.



"We've struck a fat streak in hyar. A pelt a trap fer a week runnin' ain't to be sneezed at."

sooed at this idea. A snow-storm in summer—bah!

"Nobody but a fool—or *wuss*—'d want us to camp hyar, whar the reds, ef so be they're nigh to han', ked bag us easy 's fallin' off a log. They ked crawl up 'ithin forty foot o' us, unseen—an' squash us like tumble-bugs onder a wagon-wheel fer rollin' rocks down on us from up thar. You say you're a fri'nd, old man—you talk more like one o' them cussed white Injuns!"

Warren checked the quarrel that threatened to end in bloodshed, by swearing he would shoot the man who first struck a blow, and then the train slowly moved on. It was but natural that Camp should be believed before Harris, since he had been with the train from Council Bluffs, while the other was a stranger.

But as the party entered the main portion of the pass, the sky grew more and more threatening. The oppressive heat subsided. Instead, came an icy-cold current that chilled man and beast to the bone. The fitful gusts increased in power and frequency, striking the emigrants fairly in the face, almost carrying them from their feet. The sun was hidden behind leaden clouds. Far away, just above the western horizon, could be seen a black cloud, rapidly increasing in size. Still Camp declared that they could reach the mouth of the pass in time. Upon the open ground, even if they had not time to reach secure shelter, they would be safer than in the narrow canon where the hurricane would be doubled in its force by the high walls.

The cloud advanced with frightful rapidity. Then came a dull, rumbling noise that resembled the thunders of a distant cataract, ever and anon breaking into prolonged echoes like the roll of thunder. The whirling gusts of wind blended into one steady blast, cold as the breath of an iceberg, seeming to pierce the very marrow—to cut the sensitive flesh like a keen knife. Footmen were prostrated—horses and mules staggered back—the canvas tilts of the wagons were torn into shreds.

Then came an abrupt lull. This blast was but the *avant courier* of the hurricane—of the *pouderet*. And in this interval were spoken the words that head this chapter.

The mouth of the pass was now in full view, scarce a quarter of a mile distant. Through it could be distinguished the abrupt spur of another mountain ridge, rising almost perpendicularly from the level. Under lee of this cliff the emigrants would be comparatively well sheltered from the storm. But could they gain the haven in time? Calm reason would have answered not.

The first force of the *pouderet* struck the projecting mass of verdure-clad rock. The deep, sullen warning of the hurricane abruptly changed its note—instead there now came the sharp, electric reverberations of a prolonged roll of musketry. The stiff, stubborn trees upon the mountain side were lashed furiously to and fro, then either broken short off or else torn up by the roots and carried far from their birthplace upon the mighty breath of the storm demon, and strewn thickly over the plain. Huge boulders were wrested from their repose and sent thundering adown the sloping mountain side and hurled bodily over the precipice. Clouds of dust, leaves and broken branches filled the air, as though seeking to hide this dread desolation from the eyes of man.

But then the cloud deepened—the mountain spur faded from view—the rail was no longer of dust. It was of snow, of sleet and ragged hailstones.

A moment later, and the *pouderet* swallowed up the emigrants. Its effects, though instantaneous, must be described in detail.

Frank Maynard, the young man whom John Warren had bade look to the safety of those occupying the "democrat," was a little in advance, mounted upon a stout horse. The blast struck him, crushing both horse and rider to the earth with as little resistance as a blade of grass gives to the foot that rests upon it!

The occupants of the democrat were prostrated upon the seats, and the wind burst the stout oilskin curtains from their fastenings. The one upon the left side gave way first, and to this fact is probably owed what followed. Instead of being upset, the wagon was lifted up and whirled half-way around, so that it pressed firmly against the rock wall of the pass. The horses were thrown from their feet at the same moment, and half-rolled, half-dragged over and over, until their heads were pointing in the direction of the back trail.

The foremost wagon was served even worse. The mules, staggering beneath the first shock, whirled abruptly to the right, "cramping" the wagon as it turned broadside to the hurricane, lifting a wheel clear off the ground. And thus the huge mass was prostrated.

Even above the roar of the tornado, the crashing of wood, there arose a shriek of horrible agony. Somebody—at least one human being had been stricken down by the falling wagon.

Mules, horses and cattle were overthrown. Men were carried from their feet and then dashed violently to the ground or against the jagged boulders, a score yards away. Fragments of rock began to thunder down the se-

ries of gigantic steps, loosened by the resistless breath of the *pouderet*, threatening the unfortunate emigrants with a new peril.

Snow and sleet and hailstones—the latter rough and ragged, as though composed of several smaller ones, frozen together as they came in contact, forming masses of ice large as a man's clenched fist—were driven with frightful force. Death seemed inevitable.

Fortunate indeed was it that these masses of ice were only carried upon the front of the tornado. A single moment—then there came a brief lull; the lull before the tornado.

Yet in that single moment the bewildered horses that were attached to the democrat struggled to their feet, bruised and bleeding, half-mad. The sudden start dragged Terrence McCarthy forcibly from the seat, upon which he was lying, even in that dire confusion tightly clutching the reins. He was hurled headlong beneath the fore wheels.

Then the fierce wind again howled through the pass with renewed vigor. It struck the democrat, forcing the light vehicle against the trembling animals' haunches. With a mad scream in union, they bounded forward, by what seemed a miracle, passing over the struggling pile of mules attached to the overturned wagon, and then disappeared in the blinding storm.

Only one human eye had seen them dash by. Frank Maynard had been hurled from the saddle, and thus escaped being crushed beneath his falling horse. He managed to scramble to his feet during the momentary lull. It was more than the love of life that inspired him. He was thinking of others—or rather of another—of Minnie Warren.

With a desperate wrench he half-lifted his confused animal erect, and leaped into the saddle as he saw the democrat and its priceless freight dash past him. And then, as the renewed blast struck him, he plunged his spurs more deep into his horse's flanks, and darted forward to rescue his loved one, or to share her fate.

All this transpired with the rapidity of thought. Scarce ten seconds had elapsed from the first striking of the *pouderet* till the strange chase was hidden in the storm-cloud of snow and hail, of twisted boughs and shattered rock. It was a wild, reckless chase—one that no

* A party was caught in a similar hailstorm while cutting hay on the Kansas prairies, in '62. We saved ourselves by crawling beneath the half-loaded wagon. Two of our horses were killed by the hailstones. A man and his horse were found dead; his skull was fractured. After the storm, we picked up hailstones larger than a man's clenched fist.

—AUTHOR.

really sane man could have attempted with any hopes of success. Yet Maynard never once gave thought to his own danger. He only knew that his more than life was threatened with death, and he plied spurs and bridle reins, hoarsely shouting to his horse, that, mad with terror and urged on by the bitter, terrible storm, plunged blindly forward, stumbling over boulders and limbs of trees, slipping upon the hailstones, yet, through some strange providence, keeping its feet. Surely 'twas neither its own activity nor the skill of its rider that avoided a fall, where to fall, at such a pace, would be death.

Yet a gleam of reason returned to Maynard in time to prevent a fatal error. As they neared the spot where the arms of the Y merged into the main stem, the horse naturally hugged the right hand wall; for that was the course he had followed in coming—he was upon the back track. Maynard glanced down. He saw that the tracks left by the democrat in the snow and hailstones bore to the left. Though so rapidly filling up, there could be no doubt of this. And he wrenched his animal's head around toward the upper pass. The horse stumbled and fell to its knees. But the taut rein lifted him forcibly, and the next moment he plunged into the unknown pass.

Whither did it lead? What would be the ending of this mad, reckless chase?

The pass was very much like the one already described, excepting that it was on a smaller scale. The width of level ground between the towering steps or plateaus, was barely fifty feet, and fully one-half of this was barred and choked up by the fragments of soft rock that had fallen from the cliffs. Yet, through this narrow passage the maddened horses had evidently carried the light spring wagon with its precious freight, for now, despite the driving snowstorm, Maynard could plainly distinguish the trail—he even fancied he could hear the thunder of iron-shod hoofs before him through the deafening clamor of the raging tornado. And with hopes reviving in his bosom he urged on his terrified animal, mercilessly plying spur and reins.

He did not feel the icy breath of the *pouderet*, though it was fast stiffening his every limb. He had thought only of his loved one and her peril.

He leaned impatiently forward and sought to pierce the cloud of whirling snow. He could not fairly distinguish the towering cliffs that were upon either hand. In front there seemed nothing but driving snow and clattering hailstones.

Then came a sudden change. Though the force of the wind seemed to increase, if anything, the hail ceased and the snowflakes became fewer. The vanguard of the *pouderet* had outstripped the leaden-footed mortals.

A hoarse, inarticulate cry broke from Maynard's lips. He could now distinguish the sleek-coated wagon. The terrified horses were still fleeing at top speed, aided, rather than retarded, by the democrat. At times a fierce gust of wind would hurl the vehicle fairly against their haunches. They could not have paused in their mad career, while the tornado urged them on, and kept their feet. To fall would be almost certain destruction.

In vain Maynard urged on his horse. He could not overtake them. And the clatter of iron-shod hoofs behind them still further excited the runaways.

The back curtains were driven in by the force of the wind. Maynard could just distinguish the light drapery of a woman. It was the dress worn by Ada Dixon.

Minnie—where was she? He could see nothing of her. Had she been thrown out during the mad race? Had he passed her unseen along the trail?

A groan of heartrending agony burst from Maynard's lips as this thought struck him. A vision of her mangled body lying among the cruel, jagged boulders danced before his eyes. It seemed so real, that he reeled in his saddle—the rein dropped from his benumbed hand—and as his horse stumbled, the young man was cast forward upon the animal's neck.

Mechanically clutching the thick mane, Maynard slipped back in the saddle as his horse arose. And then the mad race swept on.

"Help! for the love of God! Frank, save—" The words came indistinctly to his ear, and he saw Ada slightly lift her head; but then a severe jolt again cast her beneath the seat.

The appeal thoroughly aroused Maynard. He saw that at least one life depended upon his exertions. With a cry of encouragement he urged his horse on.

A ray of hope flashed upon him. He saw that the pass ended only a few hundred yards

ahead. He could distinguish a low line of something dark—it must be bushes, growing upon the open ground beyond.

Then a fierce blast of wind drives the snow-cloud aside. A cry of horror bursts from his lips. He draws his knife and mercilessly pricks his horse. Death—a horrible death yawns before the runaways and their helpless freight. The bushes are tree-tops, whose trunks are hidden from view! They grow in a ravine, or upon the side of a fatigued canon. And the terror-blinded animals plunge furiously toward it!

He thrusts his knife deep into his horse's hip, and leaves it rankling in the wound as he draws his revolver. The horse shrieks with pain, but he can do no more, where he is already doing his best.

The hammer falls. The cap explodes—but no report follows.

And the mad animals plunge on to their death!

CHAPTER II.

"BIRDS OF A FEATHER."

"The dogs are beginning to growl, are they? Let them dare show their teeth to me, and the devil will have a feast before his time! Chief I am and chief I will be; enough for them that I lead the way."

These words were uttered *sotto voce* by a man who stood leaning carelessly against the trunk of a cottonwood tree, his dark eyes roving over the scene before him, one hand instinctively caressing the polished butt of a revolver.

There was nothing remarkable about this personage, if his eyes be excepted. They were large, unusually brilliant, of a jetty blackness. At times languid, sleepy, they could fill with a meadow fire powerful enough to subdue the rising passions of a hungry wild beast; at such times the twin orbs seemed to pierce one through and through, to read one's inmost thoughts, to awe the most reckless spirit into mute submission.

He was neither handsome nor ugly, in face; of medium size, though rather broad-shouldered. His frame was one that would not attract a second glance in a crowd, yet a connoisseur would have declared this man possessed of extraordinary strength and activity.

Before him, stretched at ease upon the green-sward in the shade cast by the group of young cottonwoods, were nearly a score of men. Their coarse, obscene language, their masks of shaggy, ill-kempt hair and beard more than their color or dress, proclaimed these men of Anglo-Saxon lineage. Their garb partook more of the savage—only no Indian could curse and blaspheme so fluently.

One of them, a squat, red-haired Caliban, seemed especially discontented, and his voice was louder than he probably intended, as he uttered the words:

"I say it's too turned thin! What'd he promise us? Money, hosses, mules, goods—lots o' it. What is it? Jest what it war afo' we started. Whose fault is it? Our'n! Not much! It's his. We hed the chance las' night—we hev the chance now; why don't he let us bounce 'em? Mebbe he wants the redskins to git in ahead o' us. Who is he, anyhow? Kin anybody?"

"Cheese it, Firetop—look yender!" hastily muttered one of the discontented villain's comrades, fairly turning a dirty gray, as he quickly rolled away from the spot.

Firetop glanced up, and then his brilliant crest drooped. A revolver muzzle was staring him full in the face, held by the man who still leaned carelessly against the tree-trunk. The magnetic black eye shone like a coal of fire above the polished tube, and held the gaze of the discontented, surely as the diamond orbs of a rattlesnake enchains the fluttering bird.

"I can tell you, Sandy Ben—your master, dog! Stand up—fool d'y think I'll give ye time to draw that pistol! Hold up your hands—I'll not warn ye twice. There—now ask me your questions. What is it you were growling about?"

The squat ruffian sullenly rose erect and held up his unarmed hands as ordered, though it was evident he would gladly have rebelled, had he seen one chance of doing so successfully. But the silver dro covered his brain, and he knew that any such attempt would be rewarded with a half-crown of lead.

"Speak up, man—what were you growling about?"

"If you heard me at all, you know well enough," sullenly.

"No impudence—I've asked you twice. The third time 'twill be through my revolver," quietly added the chief.

"If you're sp'illin' to shoot, why don't ye blaze away? 'Twon't be the first time 'at I've smelled burnt powder."

"This will be the last time, if you don't!" "Injuns! look out, Cap—ahind ye, thar!" suddenly yelled Sandy Ben, leaping quickly aside.

The leader of this rough band involuntarily turned his head to glance behind him. And a revolver-bullet grazed his cheek, severing a lock of the silken whiskers in its passage.

Quick as thought the half-dropped pistol was leveled, and a second report followed the first, like an echo. Without a groan, Sandy Ben wheeled half around, throwing up his arms, the still smoking revolver dropping from his nerveless grasp; then he fell forward upon his face, dead, shot through the brain.

The chief was still leaning against the trunk, nor did he move as the men simultaneously sprung to their feet with drawn weapons, other than to lift the hammer of his revolver. His face was calm and composed, though his eyes seemed to emit a phosphorescent gleam, as he spoke.

"A shot for a shot—'tis true prairie law. But if any one of you object, I will be happy to accommodate you."

"The boss is right, boys," said a tall, gaunt specimen of humanity. "Sandy Ben pulled fast—an' sence the durned greeny couldn't shoot no better'n that, why he'd orter kick the bucket. Miss the size of a man—'at fifteen yards—git out!"

This characteristic speech turned the tide in the captain's favor, and the threatened mutiny died out. The slayer of Sandy Ben now appeared an entirely different person. He was as cordial and affable as he had been stern and haughty.

"Thank you, my lads—we'll get on finely, now. Sandy Ben was the only fool among you—he thought he could drive me, by hot words. But enough of him—roll the carrion into the creek—then listen, I will tell you, now, just what my plans are. I intended doing so, all along, but he would have said that fear of him made me."

"You know this much, that my name is Mat Mole, that I hired you at fifty dollars per month, to do a job of work for me. You know that this job is connected with the emigrant-train ahead of us, but nothing more. As the hour for winding up the job is now at hand, I'll tell you my whole plans."

"You know that John Warren is boss of this train. He is my enemy. The man that

shows me his scalp, I will pay double wages, when we return to Council Bluffs. Silence! wait until I am done."

"There are two women with the train—Warren's daughter and niece. His daughter—the brown-haired one—must be mine, unharmed. The other you can dispose of—by drawing lots, or by cards, just as you choose."

"Warren is bound for the coast of California, where he expects to make a fortune in the hide and tallow trade. His brother wrote him to come—that he had made nearly a million in five years. Warren sold out, and is taking his money along to buy land and cattle. He has over two thousand dollars in gold with him. This sum you can divide between you, I ask nothing, only that you help me in getting his daughter."

The men cheered loudly at this intelligence. At that moment they would have charged death itself, had Mat Mole desired them.

"You have wondered why I did not strike at once—why I have delayed so long, and thrown away so many fair opportunities. Well, I am a man that likes to make all sure, before I show my hand. Not one of this party must escape with their lives. They are nearly double our force. Even if we had surprised them, as we might have done a score of times, there would have been a tough fight, and some of them might have got away. Now, if they escape us, the Indians will pick them up before they can reach safety."

"What's to hinder the varmints from pickin' us up, as well?" asked Tobin, the tall, gaunt man.

"We are in the Blackfoot country, and I can do with them whatever I will. They will aid, not oppose us. Besides, we have a friend with these emigrants. Their guide is in my pay. You see how far they have wandered from the right trail. Well, we have Chris Camp to thank for that. You know the trouble I have taken to lay false 'sign' around their camps. Chris read that as I bade him. Under the pretense of giving the Blackfeet the slip, he has led them into the very heart of the Blackfoot country. This night, if everything works well, we will finish our job and—"

A low, peculiar whistle echoed from down the shallow stream, interrupting Mat Mole in his speech. The men seemed to recognize the signal, but when it was repeated, with a different cadence, each man sprung for his rifle. Even Mole appeared startled.

The next moment a tall, lithe figure glided into view, and approached Mat Mole.

"What is it, Vern?" asked the leader, sharply.

"Indians—two-score—trailing us," was the quick reply.

"Of what tribe?"

"Blackfeet, I think. They were too close for me to lose any time. They are painted for the war-path."

"Then it's all right. Boys, I see you forget what I told you. These Blackfeet will be our allies, not enemies, if we will share with them. They need not know anything about the gold—you can afford to let them have the mules. But *cache* yourselves, and wait. Watch me close. Agree to everything I say, and all will be well."

"We can whip them, captain," muttered the scout.

"No need. Don't you see we can make these fools play cat to our monkeys? They may burn their fingers, but they will do our work and save us much trouble and some few lives. But there—I must go meet them."

Mat Mole glided down the creek, quickly disappearing amid the undergrowth. His men promptly *cached* themselves, their weapons in readiness for use in case their leader's confidence should be misplaced.

The scout alone appeared dissatisfied. He would rather have met the Blackfeet as enemies than on a friendly footing. And when it is said that his father's scalp hung in the smoke of a Blackfoot lodge, the sentiment is not strange.

Vernon Campbell was a character, in his way. Ten years before—when he was barely fifteen—his last relative had been killed, and he taken prisoner by the Blackfeet. Six months later he managed to escape, by killing his adopted father and brother, stealing a couple of horses, and reached the settlements in safety, though pursued for two days and nights. Since then he had devoted his life to hunting Indians. Young as he was, his deeds were well known among the Blackfeet, and his name was a terror to them. He had joined Mole, on learning they were bound for the Blackfoot country, without asking the object of their journey. Nor would he have cared much, since, as may be supposed, his conscience had been slightly exercised during the past years.

He was tall, lithe, straight as an Indian, an adept in all athletic sports, a perfect master of his weapons, and one of the surest trailers in the West. His features were regular, almost classic in their outline. His fair hair hung in slightly-curling locks below his shoulders. His face was perfectly smooth. Like the Indian, he occasionally plucked all superfluous hair from his face. His garb was plain, formed wholly of Indian-dressed buckskin, neither fringed nor ornamented. A round, tight-fitting skull cap of buckskin covered his head. His eyes needed no protection. If need be, he could gaze at the noonday sun without dimming their luster.

Mat Mole glided rapidly down the creek-bank, using considerable caution, but more so if from force of habit than because he apprehended danger. And yet he was almost within hearing of a Blackfoot war-party—those most inveterate enemies of the white sex.

He paused upon the edge of the undergrowth. Before him lay half a mile of valley that was perfectly free of trees or bushes, the ground covered with naught save a short, close-curling grass. Up this valley the pale-faces had passed on the preceding evening.

"Their trailers will not be far in advance," muttered Mole. "They won't dream we are so near, as the trail is full fifteen hours old. I don't think there'll be any trouble, though 'tis ten years and more since I left them."

A few moments later Mat Mole saw two footmen enter the open ground, gliding rapidly forward, their heads bowed like hounds running by scent. Before these trailers had passed over half the space, a strong body of horsemen followed upon their track. Mole gazed keenly at them, but the bright rays of the sun glinting across the freshly-painted and oiled faces, baffled him. He could only tell that this was indeed a Blackfoot war-party.

Placing a hand to his mouth, Mat Mole pealed forth the shrill, unearthly war-whoop of the Kaima Blackfeet. It was heard distinctly, and the savage riders instantly drew rein, glaring toward the timber in surprise. Then came a long-drawn, peculiar yell, dying away in a quivering wail; a yell that has chilled many a bold heart—for it was a startling imitation of the panther's cry. It was Mat Mole's "totem."

The Blackfeet seemed to recognize the yell, and as the white man boldly emerged from the brush a gayly bedizened chief galloped forward

to meet him. A slight exclamation of joy broke from Mole's lips, for he knew that all was well. He recognized in the chief an old time friend and comrade, Neepaughweese, or the "Night-Walker."

The meeting was cordial upon both sides, and quite a long conversation ensued, but which need not be inflicted upon the reader in all its details. The Blackfeet were glad to learn that Creeping Panther was still living, though they had heard he had long since been dispatched to the happy hunting-grounds by a white snake, who, fearing to meet the eye of a brave, crept up and struck him from behind. On the other hand, Creeping Panther had not forgotten his red brethren, but had brought them a band of stout braves, whose hearts were red, though their skins were pale, to help fight their battles. And, too, he had driven before him a rich wagon-train filled with goods, and attended by plenty of good scalps, to prove that he had not forgotten his red friends. He had kept the hatchets of the Atoes and Sioux away from them, that the Blackfeet might not be robbed of their prize. The Blackfeet were to have the horses, the mules, the goods and wagons, all except two poor squaws that he had said must help fill his lodge with braves and chiefs to lead the noble Blackfeet upon the war-path.

This speech was most graciously received. The Night-Walker, on behalf of his braves, pledged himself to greet Creeping Panther's warriors as brothers, and together they would dispatch the wagon-train. And with this understanding the party hastened on up the creek.

Nearing camp, Mole gave the signal that all was well, and a minute later the allies were grouped together on the most auspicious footing. All except Vernon Campbell. He stood apart, sullen and discontented, his weapons ready for use in case he should be recognized. But he had changed greatly since his captivity, and not one of the Blackfeet suspected this young stripling of being that dreaded scourge of their race, Pacanne-puck-on-che-luk, or the "Man that drinks blood."

Evidently Mat Mole distrusted the self-control of Vernon, for he bade him set forth and dog the emigrants to their night-camp. As though glad to put temptation behind him, Campbell left the camp.

Mole and the Night-Walker, after some further grandiloquent speeches, quickly arranged their plans for the capture of the train. Mole translating the agreement for his followers' into view, and approached Mat Mole.

With the least respects it corresponded with what the leader had already told his men, only that now the Blackfeet were to do most of the work, which was but natural, since they were to have the largest share of the plunder, if not the most valuable.

The council was abruptly broken up by the storm, that had long been brewing. Warned by the weatherwise Indians, the adventurers took their horses down the valley to the open ground, and then threw them, securely tying their legs. Shrouded in their blankets, the men crouched down behind their animals' bodies, and awaited the *poudere*.

It came in all its fury—the wind, the sleet, the snow, the hail—not even Night-Walker had ever witnessed such a terrible storm. It seemed as though the end of the world had come.

CHAPTER III.

THE SPIRIT OF THE ENCHANTED VALLEY.

"WAGH!"

"What is it, boyee?"

"Sign—Blackfoot, I reckon."

"Two sizes—'toes p'inted up, to'ds our *cache*—no back trail. A blind man could read it, boyees. These imps may not hev come hyer lookin' for us in preticklar, but they must 'a' seed our sign up the valley, 'less they're plum blind. What then? Why they'll puck ahee a'ter help to come back an' raise our pelts."

"I reckon we'd better puckachee,* then," suggested one.

"An' I reckon no. We've struck a fat streak in hyar. A pelt a trap for a week runnin' ain't to be sneezed at. Then shall we puckachee jist becuse we run on a couple o' Injun huff-marks in the sand? I reckon you're jist a-coddlin', Brindle Joe."

"Jist as you say, Yallerstone—don't matter to me."

"Waal, hunker down hyar; the varmints might sight us, afore we got a good ready. Now 'is'en. You fellers said you'd let me choose our trail on this trip. You see'd that I didn't lie to ye 'bout the fur hyar. You know thar's plenty more 'round. Now, shall we stick it out a little longer, or shall we go an' tell the brigade of our find? Ef they come, our sheer 'll be smaller, but we'll be strong enough then to laugh at the hall Blackfoot tribe. What shall we do?"

"Do jist as you say, old man," promptly replied Brindle Joe.

"I knowed it—I knowed you was true grit, ef 'ar to the backbone! Ef you'd 'a' said de frunt, Brindle Joe, I'd 'a' bin dis'a'p'inted in my old pard. But thar—I reckon we've got other work than to giss all day. Joe, you an' Mexy come wif me. Hoosier, you an' Heely 'a' Hank catch hyar an' ef a red comes down this away, save 'im 'thout burnin' powder, ef possible, but save 'im dead to rights. Understand?"

Yellowstone Jack and his comrades glided rapidly but stealthily up the valley, leaving their two friends in ambush behind them.

These men, with one other, who had been found, arrow-pierced and scalpless, upon his "run," three days before, had joined the brigade under command of the veteran, "Old Jim Bridger," for the "spring hunt." Yellowstone Jack, a "prime hand," despite his youth, had gained leave to take a few comrades with him to visit a secret preserve of his own. Bridger granted this request the more readily that he knew the Indians, into whose country they had penetrated, were most likely fully engaged with their hunting further south-east. "Until this 'meat-making' was completed, they would have little time for aught else."

The little party met with extraordinary success. Scarce a trap was set that did not snatch a beaver or an otter. And though spring furs, being lighter, are less in price than the winter pelts, the adventurers were in high glee as they calculated the profits of the trip. How many pleasures—what glorious drinks—the intoxicating smiles of women—how many nights of delicious gaming could be had with their earnings!

Yet all was not serene. There was something about them that they could not understand. During the past two weeks they had caught occasional glimpses of a woman—of what appeared to be a marvelously beautiful and graceful girl. But could a human being appear and vanish so abruptly, so mysteriously? Was it not—and those bold hearts, who would have faced scores of bloodthirsty ene-

gies without flinching a hair's breadth, drew closer together as they read the same suspicion in each other's eyes—was it not rather a *spirit*?

A trapper is nothing, if not superstitious. Then came the murder of their comrade. He had been shot with an arrow, then scalped. But the fatal weapon had been carefully removed from the wound. The banks of the stream bore no impression of human feet, save those of the unfortunate trapper, though the body lay in open ground, a score or more yards from the water. Could a warrior have passed over that sward of soft young grass without leaving a trail? Yet those keen-eyed, skillful men, their perception sharpened by a burning thirst for revenge, could discover nothing.

Still they continued their rounds, but always rendezvoused at a given point before venturing into the valley where they made their head-quarters, lest an ambush should have been laid there to cut them off one by one as they returned from visiting their traps.

Yellowstone Jack peered cautiously from his covert behind the point of rocks that barred from view the upper end of the romantic little valley, or *cul-de-sac*, to speak more correctly, that served as their retreat. A deadly fire kindled in his blue eyes as he hastily withdrew his head.

"The varmints is sneakin' down this way—ready, boyees!" he muttered, drawing the stout-bladed butcher-knife from his belt, and preparing for a forward leap.

Only a few yards off two dusky, shining-skinned forms glided crouching along through the scattered shrubbery. They were Indians—the same, beyond a doubt, who had made the trail that sharp-eyed Brindle Joe detected.

The trappers had only one thought. Vengeance for their murdered comrade was within their grasp. It was enough that these intruders were red-men. They could not be friends.

"Sook it to 'em, boys!" muttered Yellowstone Jack, as he leaped upon the foremost savage with the unerring aim of a lurking carcajou who for hours has patiently watched for the unconscious victim to pass beneath its perch.

There was little or no struggle. The Blackfeet were taken so completely by surprise that they had no chance to offer resistance. Quick and deadly as the lightning's flash, Yellowstone buried his knife half-deep in the savage's heaving chest, and then bore him heavily backward, stifling in his throat the convulsive death-shriek that otherwise would have rung out in all its fierce agony. Then—with one horrible shudder, the rigid limbs relaxed. The spirit of the red-man had fled—had entered upon the long and weary trail that leads to the cherished hunting-grounds of his traditions.

"Whoop-oo!" uttered Yellowstone, but in a subdued tone, as he turned around just in time to see Brindle Joe arise from the corpse of his antagonist. "I reckon Fatty Smith 'd grin now, ef he could on'y see how we make our words good—though his skelp was wuth a dozen sech pelts as these!"

"Carrai! you big varmints don't give a little man fair show—you take all the fun, like boys!" grumbled the little Mexican, Chavez.

"Better luck next time, babby. Thar was'n't time for drawin' lots. But see—lift thar 'a's, while I go see ef all's right wif the *cache*."

"Ge-thunder! look 'eader!" muttered Brindle Joe, pointing across the valley, his deeply-bronzed and grotesquely-freckled face—from which his *nom de nique* was derived—turning a shade lighter.

(To be continued.)

The Flying Yankee:

ON THE OCEAN OUTCAST.

A NAUTICAL ROMANCE OF 1812.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

CHAPTER VII.

THE STORM-CHASE.

WONDERING at the strange maneuver of the lieutenant, Strange was, however, silent, and stood ready to obey the slightest order, for he had implicit confidence in Noel's skill and courage.

"On darted the schooner, until she came once more to the head of Great Island, and scarce half a mile divided her from the brig, which had ceased firing upon noticing her put about, believing those on board of her had seen their inability to escape, and were coming back to surrender."

Commodore Cutting had just given the order to Lieutenant Ainslie to luff the brig, and her bows were sweeping gracefully around in obedience to her helm, when suddenly, there was a surprised cry forward, and all eyes were at once turned again upon the yacht.

Having discovered that, if he kept the ship-channel to the northward of Great Island, his craft would soon be overhauled, or sunk by the fire of the brig, Noel had at once determined, as his fore-topmast was shot away, to put back and attempt to run the south passage, between the main, upon which stood Portsmouth, and the island before referred to.

For this reason he had put back to gain the head of Great Island, although he well knew the channel through which he would have to pass, to reach the open sea, was, in some places, but three feet in depth.

But the yacht drew little over two feet of water, and he determined to risk it, and with such success was his attempt carried out that, as he anticipated, the brig was brought up into the wind, believing him on his way back to surrender.

The exclamation of surprise then on the Vulture, arose from seeing the schooner round the head of Great Island, ease off the sheets free, and dart away before the wind, her sails spread out wing-and-wing.

The brig having come to, it was some moments before she could be gotten under way again and all drawing, so that when she reached the head of Great Island the schooner was half-way through the shallow and intricate channel, and passing Pest Island.

"There comes the last gun she can fire at us, for some time, Stranger," said Noel, quietly, as one of the broadside guns sent a shot over the schooner, just as the brig continued on in the ship-channel.

"That was a daring and skillful move, sir," said the seaman; "you seem to know these waters well!"

"Yes, I have sailed on them from boyhood; but see, yonder are the spars of the brig above the island, and how rapidly she glides along; but we will distance her greatly by this move, for this channel is much shorter than the other; and see, we are now coming into Little Harbor, and yonder is the open sea."

On flew the schooner, the brig now far astern,

and, having passed Kitt's Rock, the swell of the ocean caused her to pitch heavily, for a high sea was running.

"Lieutenant, see there," and Stranger pointed stern of them to the heavens, which were black with masses of clouds, that had suddenly arisen above the horizon and were rapidly overspreading the sky.

"That is another enemy, yet still a friend, Stranger, for I can hug the shore while the brig dare not. By Heaven! see, the whole sky is overcast already."

"I can no longer see the brig, sir; shall I shorten sail?"

"No, not yet; we have now an offing of two miles, and I will put away on a southerly course. Jibe the mainsail over, and haul the fore and main sheets close aft; trim all close and be-lay."

The wind was blowing a stiff seven knot breeze from the westward, and under her clouds of canvas the schooner staggered and plunged heavily; but, anxious to place as great a distance as possible between himself and the brig, Noel stood on, hoping in the darkness to elude the vigilance of his pursuers.

"Stranger, lower away the flying jib, and then let fall the foresail, so that you can reef close."

"Ay, ay, sir!" and in a short while, under greatly reduced sail, the yacht held on, the wind each moment increasing.

"Here, Stranger, take the helm, while I go below, for I would know what water and stores we have aboard, that I may decide whether to put in to some town on the coast, or stand right on southward."

Stranger sprang to the helm, and descending into the cabin Noel glanced around him, and then quickly examined the store-room, water casks, and the other compartments below decks, having lighted the cabin lamp and a lantern he found on the table.

"Ho, Stranger," he called out to the seaman, in a joyous tone, "the yacht has just been stored and prepared for a cruise, for there are provisions sufficient aboard to last us a month, besides several fowling pieces and pistols; she was evidently to start on a hunting-expedition along the coast."

"I am glad of it, sir; so much the better for us; but will you please come upon deck again," answered the seaman, and, delighted about the discovery he had made about the yacht, Noel ascended to the deck, for the excitement of the chase kept down the poignant sorrow he otherwise would have felt, at the deed his hand had wrought only a few hours before.

One glance around the dark waters, and up at the black heavens, and he knew why the seaman had called him to the deck, for the yacht was bounding before a gale that each moment increased in fury.

"We are going to have a black time of it, sir."

"Yes; I'll take the helm, while you lower away the jib. There, now; leave her fore-topmast stay-sail, and come aft and let fall her main-sail. That will do; now reef her to her lightest reef-points; for she'll need some main-sail to bring her round, if we have to lay to."

With wonderful strength and agility, Stranger had obeyed the order given him, and, with only a close-reefed main-sail and fore-topmast stay-sail, both stretched to their utmost tension, the yacht kept on, staggering over and through the wild waters, which were rendered blacker by the mass of clouds hovering low over the sea, and from which broke a mournful roar of thunder.

"Hal there comes the first flash of lightning. Now keep a bright watch for the next, and we'll see what has become of the brig," said Noel, whose face was pale and brow stern, for he could not but feel that it was God's anger upon him for the deed his hand had wrought, and even the stoical seaman felt awed by the mighty power of an avenging Almighty.

Suddenly the whole sea was a broad flame of light; a vivid, forked spear of lightning pierced the dark masses of storm-clouds, darted with angry zigzag, fiery splendor from the heavens, and amid a crash of thunder that shook the very waters, descended oceanward until it struck the tall, tapering spars of the brig of war, two miles to windward of the schooner.

"God in heaven! but this is awful! Oh, what misery and despair, have I brought upon my ill-fated companions!" cried Noel, momentarily releasing his hold upon the teller.

"It is fearful, sir; but look out, or the yacht will founder," answered Stranger, as he sprung forward, and seized the helm and once more held the yacht on her course.

By an effort recovering himself, Noel turned his gaze across the waters, and watched with burning eyes the flames dart along the rigging, and blend the spars and sails in fiery serpents.

"See! she has come to; and hark! they are cutting away her masts. God grant she may be saved."

"Yes, lieutenant, I hope they will be saved, for there are many brave and noble men on yonder vessel; but we have no need to dread them now, so had we not better lay to, for the schooner is nearly drowned forward, and I fear she may run under, as the gale is increasing."

"You are right, my good friend. Here, give me the helm, and stand ready, for I'll take advantage of the next favorable wave to bring her up."

A moment more and the gallant little vessel had brought her bows into the wind, and lay upon the storm-swept waves in comparative safety, while the two men, who so bravely guided her destiny, turned their eyes fixedly upon the

shipmates perish while I have a sound deck beneath my feet."

"Mr. Moncrief, your heart is in the right place, sir; I will stand ready to obey your orders, even if in saving them we put our own necks in the hangman's noose," answered the brave sailor with firmness.

The brig could now be distinguished by the flash of her signal guns, to be but a few cables length distant, rolling and pitching heavily in the sea, and coming down toward the schooner only a short distance to leeward.

Grasping firmly by the mainstays, Noel awaited until the wreck came near, and just as the roar of another gun died away, hailed in a loud, ringing voice:

"Ho! the brig, ahoy!"

No answer came for a moment, and then in the voice of Lieutenant Ainslie was the reply:

"Ahoy! who hails, and where away?"

"The chase; off your windward bow. Do you wish aid?"

A murmur of voices could be heard for an instant, and then Lieutenant Ainslie cried:

"We were struck by lightning; our masts are cut away, and we are leaking badly."

"My vessel is large enough to hold your crew; I'll hang off your quarter in case of need."

A moment there was silence, and as the brig was driving by, Noel said:

"She must bear sail, Stranger; raise the foremast-stay-sail."

With great difficulty the order was executed, and in a few moments the schooner was again driving before the gale, but with terrible risk, and soon overhauled the brig, when Noel again hailed:

"I'll hang near you, in case of need."

"Who is that that hails?" suddenly cried the stentorian voice of Commodore Cutting.

"Noel Moncrief," boldly answered the young officer, and his words brought a ringing cheer from the crew of the brig.

"I know it! No, Mr. Moncrief, we are in no immediate danger; our pumps will keep us afloat, and we can soon rig jurmasts."

"No, sir, if we could not take you by fair means we will not by foul; so stand on your course, young man, and if life is dear to you, keep clear of the United States."

A perfect yell of joy came from the seamen of the brig, all of whom sympathized with Noel, and admired his courage and the noble offer he had but just made to serve them, and again the commodore cried:

"Moncrief, it was noble of you to desire to serve us, and we thank you for it."

Again the clear and manly tones of Noel Moncrief were heard, and all remained silent to hear him, for the schooner was forging ahead, as he hailed:

"Commodore Cutting, I thank you for your kindness. One and all, shipmates, farewell."

Three cheers were given by the brig's crew, even the officers joining in, and the gale somewhat abating, the mainsail of the schooner was raised, and at sunrise, as the Vulture, having rigged temporary masts, headed back toward Portsmouth, the little yacht, with its daring commander, was far to the southward, a mere speck upon the restless waters.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BUCCANEER BARGE.

ONE pleasant afternoon, some two months after the escape of the yacht, Dart, from Portsmouth harbor, a small, sharp-bowed craft, with two slender masts rigged with lateen sails, was sailing quietly along the shores of Cuba, for the scene of my story now changes, kind reader, from the rock-bound coast of the North to the waters of the sunny South.

The *carrera*, for such is the name given to craft of the kind mentioned above, appeared not to be, as are many of her class in the Indies, a swift sailer, for though she had all sail spread to catch the four-knot breeze that was blowing, she was not making anything more out of it than would many a vessel of even a less fair build.

At any rate, the *carrera* was a comfortable little craft of perhaps ten tons, and her deck cleanly kept and in perfect order, while her cabin was large, roomy, and almost luxuriously furnished, which at once discovered her to belong to some coast planter of wealth, and used by him as a pleasant means of conveyance to and from his estates, when his business called him to Havana or Matanzas.

Upon the deck of the *carrera* were visible nine persons, one of whom was a tall, stalwart man, dressed in white duck, and who appeared to be the commander, for he held the helm, and every now and then gave some order to four negroes forward, who formed the crew.

The helmsman was not a negro, though his face was very dark; but in his features and dark flashing eyes could be traced the blood of a descendant of that ancient tribe of Indians, the Ecurians, who were the original possessors of the island which it has cost Spain so many human lives to hold.

Amidships stood two other persons, a young man and a young girl, both showing in their faces the admixture of the white with the African race, and their appearance indicating that they held the responsible positions of *vale* and *femme-de-chambre* to an old gentleman and a maiden who were seated aft, upon a low settee, apparently enjoying the beauty of the evening and the scenery along the coast, for the *carrera* was hardly a mile from the curving shores.

The old gentleman referred to was a person of striking appearance, for his face was darkly bronzed, his eyes intensely black and brilliant, while his mustache and curling hair were snow-white.

Dressed in a suit of white linen, with a broad *sombrero* upon his head, Don Octavio Guido looked exactly what he was, a wealthy planter of Cuba, and one who, in his earlier years, evidently had seen military service in the field.

The maiden by his side, the Donna Violeta, was one of those dark types of beautiful women, peculiarly Spanish in face and form.

Her every motion was graceful, and her figure slight, molded with marvelous symmetry, and rather above the prescribed height for a perfect form, but still it appeared faultless in the close-fitting bodice and skirt of dark gray cloth.

The eyes were slumbering wells of fire, only needing a spark of love or anger to cause them to flash forth passion or brilliant flames; the face was in repose beautiful and Madonna-like, but as now and then it would light up as some pretty scene opened to her view shoreward, it was full of animation and sparkling loveliness; a face olive in hue, tinted with the rich blood of health, perfect in mold, and strangely fascinating to one upon whom it was turned with kindness.

Upon her head, besides the rich dark veil that drooped upon her shapely shoulders, Senorita Violeta wore a broad sun hat, that cast in shadow and half hid the braids of black hair, drawn back from the forehead and fastened in a circling mass with a gold comb.

So intently were all on board the craft engaged in watching the landscape panorama, as they glided along, that they failed to observe a *drogher*, a kind of freight vessel used to carry coffee and sugar from the plantations to the city, that had suddenly come out of a lagoon, half hidden by the forests that overhung its mouth, and was standing boldly down upon them.

The *drogher* had two stumpy masts, upon which were hoisted by pulleys two long yards with large triangular sails, which, instead of reefing in a blow, could be lowered in an instant into the hold of the lugger, which was open, excepting a canvas covering stretched across and supported by a spar acting as a cross-beam.

But one man was visible upon the lugger, and he was at the helm, apparently endeavoring all he could to take advantage of the light wind to eat up to windward of the *carrera*.

For a while he was successful in his maneuver, and had nearly gained the wind of the smaller craft, when the quick eye of the helmsman of the *carrera* fell upon him, and a stern order from his lips brought all on board to their feet.

"What is it, Lalul?" asked Don Octavio, quickly.

The Indian answered in Spanish:

"Yonder *drogher* means no good, coming down on us that way; trim the sails closer, and I'll edge more into the wind," and the tones of his voice were strangely soft and musical.

The order was obeyed, and for a moment all watched anxiously to see the result, for piratical craft were frequent in those waters at the time this story is laid, and especially were the lagoon buccaners dreaded as a most cruel and ferocious set.

"*Nombre de Dios*, but she gains rapidly upon us, Lalul! Suppose we square away and run before the wind!" said Don Octavio, in an anxious tone.

"I'll try it, señor. Let go the halyards fore and aft," and away the *carrera* sped before the wind, to have her example followed the moment after by the *drogher*.

"This will never do, Lalul! for see, the lugger is now on her best sailing points."

The Indian helmsman glanced quickly over his own vessel, then steadily for a while at the pursuer, and at once gave the orders to the negro crew to trim in the sheets, while he put her away upon her former course, for with the wind on her quarter the *drogher* would also have to change, and it was evident she was not gaining as rapidly before they put away as before.

"She still overhauls us, señor; but not as rapidly as before."

"No, Lalul, what do you believe that *drogher* to be?" and Don Octavio glanced anxiously toward his beautiful daughter, who, with pale face, was watching the approach of the strange vessel.

"Señor, I think the lugger is a pirate," answered the Indian, in a low tone.

"My God! I feared so. Lalul, we must not be taken," and the Cuban again glanced toward Violeta.

"No, señor, it is death anyway; so let us die with arms in our hands."

"Well said—Ha! yonder comes another sail!" and the Cuban pointed some two miles ahead, to where a small rakish-looking schooner was just rounding a point of land.

The helmsman seized a glass and gazed intently at the strange sail for a moment, and then said:

"She does not belong to these waters, but looks like an American-built vessel. If she was not so small I would believe her to be a buccaner, also."

"Mary, mother of God, grant it be a friend! Here, one of you boys, lower our flag to half-mast and let him see we need his succor!" cried the Cuban.

The flag of Spain soon floated at half-mast, and all eyes were eagerly turned toward the schooner, to denote the slightest change in her course.

Soon it came; her bow swung round quickly, and, with the wind very nearly astern, she came flying down toward the *carrera*.

The *drogher* at once also presented a scene of action, for a dozen dark forms were discovered moving upon her decks, and quickly four long and heavy sweeps were put out, to endeavor to overhail the chase ere the schooner got to her.

With intense excitement all on board the *carrera* watched the flight of their own vessel, which, pressed to her utmost speed, was only making about five knots, and then turned their eyes upon the rapid approach of the lugger, still nearly a mile astern, but coming with increased speed. Again they glanced ahead, toward the schooner, which, with a wall of foam about her sharp bows, was rushing toward them.

"Señor, that *drogher* is one of the fastest of her class; but, swift as she is, yonder schooner is a far better sailer," and Lalul handed the glass to Don Octavio, who, placing it to his eye, turned it toward the little vessel that had so nobly answered their sign of distress.

"Lalul, she carries but one gun that I can see—a small brass piece upon her forecabin, and I can only observe some dozen men upon her decks."

"Enough, with our aid, to beat off fifty of the *drogher's* crew. Shall I huff closer, so as to speak him?"

"Yes, Lalul. Violeta, see how swiftly yonder schooner comes on—oh, see, yonder goes her flag—she is an American!"

"Yes, father; I have watched her rapid approach, and, though most anxious, have not failed to note her grace and speed. See, the schooner is altering her course and will come near us."

A few moments more and with her sharp prow cutting the water and dashing showers of spray upon either side, the schooner had come within a cable's length, and was so heading as to pass within a few fathoms of Don Guido's craft.

Suddenly a manly form sprang into the schooner's main-rigging, and a clear voice hailed:

"Ho, the *carrera*!"

"Ahoy the schooner!" answered Lalul.

"Is yonder *drogher* in chase of you?"

"Ay, it is a lagoon pirate."

"All right. I have not men enough to board him, but will give him a lesson. In the mean time, stand on as you are, and I will protect you all in my power."

"I thank you, sir," and ere the don could say more the schooner had passed by and was rushing on toward the *drogher*.

"A daring fellow that, and indeed a generous one to throw himself between us and danger; but it is just like those Americans, reckless and noble-hearted to a fault," said the don, with enthusiasm.

"What a splendid-looking man he was, father, and his Spanish was perfect, and his voice clear and ringing," said Violeta, still gazing after the receding schooner.

"I'll warrant your eyes could soon discover

his fine form and face, and your ears drink in the melody of his voice, for ever is it thus with women."

Violeta blushed, but made no reply, and her father turned toward Lalul to address him, when, across the waters, came in distinct tones, in Spanish:

"The *drogher*, ahoy! Put back or I will fire into you!"

A derisive cheer was the only answer, and the next instant there came a puff of smoke from the bows of the schooner, and the roar of a six-pounder floated over the waters, followed by a crash of timbers and yells and groans of pain and fury coming from on board the *drogher*.

To hail the buccaner has met his match, if it is only a little schooner, one-fourth his size. See, see! there goes another shot, and while the *drogher* comes up into the wind the schooner is changing her course and wearing round," exclaimed Don Octavio, who, with Violeta, Lalul and the others, earnestly watched the movements of the brave little vessel.

After firing a second gun, which did considerable damage, as had the first shot, on board the *drogher*, the brave little schooner wore round, hauled her sheets in board and stood away in the wake of the *carrera*.

Rapidly the little schooner overhauled the *carrera*, and keeping in her wake and a point closer to windward, threatened to shave her, as she passed by, and the Cuban planter and Lalul watched his strange movements, for they knew not yet what was the intention of the American.

Nearer and nearer the schooner approached, and just as her sharp bowsprit hovered over the stern of the *carrera*, she fell off quickly, and, passing to leeward, her commander cried:

"Spring aboard there, men, and hold the two vessels firm together," and the next instant a young man, clad in a light, blue flannel suit and with a naval cap, sprang upon the *carrera's* deck.

It was Noel Moncrief.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 276.)

RED ROB, The Boy Road-Agent.

BY OLL COOMES.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE SUNSET DOOM.

A DEEP, ominous murmur followed the reading of the verdict, and a general movement swayed the crowd. Octavia, almost unconscious in her sudden grief, was led away by Maggie from the prison, it is no more than natural, no doubt, that I should think so without offending the jury. But with the evidence of Raviso and Walbrooke, I can't see how they arrived at the verdict they did. The first swore that I attacked the *casa* at eleven o'clock on a certain night, and an hour after, according to Walbrooke's evidence, I was fifty miles north of there in the Conchos saloon, shooting down drunkards and gamblers, Walbrooke says; and then in the same breath, almost, swore that a free fight was going on when I called my men in, and that the dead had all been 'stobbed' to death. Now, why is this thus, your honor?"

The judge sat down, and Red Rob rose to his feet, and in that same calm, clear voice, said:

"Your honor, I have nothing to say why you should not fulfill your duty in this matter; but I am at a loss to know why the jury found the verdict they did, unless they had previously made up their minds, and the evidence failed to remove their prejudice. This, however, is only my opinion, and as I am somewhat interested in the matter, it is no more than natural, no doubt, that I should think so without offending the jury. But with the evidence of Raviso and Walbrooke, I can't see how they arrived at the verdict they did. The first swore that I attacked the *casa* at eleven o'clock on a certain night, and an hour after, according to Walbrooke's evidence, I was fifty miles north of there in the Conchos saloon, shooting down drunkards and gamblers, Walbrooke says; and then in the same breath, almost, swore that a free fight was going on when I called my men in, and that the dead had all been 'stobbed' to death. Now, why is this thus, your honor?"

He concluded, with a smile.

"It is not for me to criticize the action of the jury," said the judge. "I have only to act upon their verdict, as they acted upon the evidence; and it gives me pain to have this duty to discharge. You are but a boy in years, possessed of more than ordinary personal appearance, courage and executive ability, all of which you could have turned to a better purpose than you have. You have conducted yourself during this trial in a manner which I cannot think comes of bravado, nor the self-assurance of acquittal. There is that in your countenance which is open and manly, and calculated to command sympathy and admiration. These natural gifts of nature never should have been perverted as they have been. They never should have been tarnished with crime, for to be a robber, as you have been, is to be a murderer. The penalty must cover both. A band of organized robbers cannot carry on their nefarious business without taking life, although they may have no desire to shed innocent blood. The power of a robber-chief over his men is absolute, so he must be responsible for all that the band does in violation of the laws of the land. It therefore becomes my solemn duty to pronounce upon you the sentence of death. The coming evening at sunset you will suffer the penalty of your crimes by being shot, and may God have mercy upon your soul."

A silence that was broken only by the rustle of the swaying pinons succeeded this awful sentence. Yet there was a wild tumult within every breast, which finally burst forth in a general murmur. The crowd surged to and fro. Many were the exclamations of joy over the fate of the young robber, and many were the expressions of sympathy.

Red Rob was now bound, for fear he would endeavor to avert his doom by escape. A strong guard was then placed over him. The youth still conducted himself with that calm resignation which had marked his conduct from the moment of his capture.

His men seemed little disturbed in mind by the coming fate so near at hand, for they continued to play cards, smoke their pipes and "spin their yarns."

Asa Sheridan and Albert St. Kenelm held a long conversation after the trial had ended. Dakota Dan had recommended the major to Sheridan, who embraced the earliest opportunity to make known the object that was nearest his heart—the rescue of the lovely Zella from the robbers at the old ruins.

There was something about St. Kenelm that at once drew him into Sheridan's entire confidence and respect. In his tall figure, his clear, bright eye and open, manly countenance, there was something to inspire admiration. Moreover, there was a vague familiarity—a dream-like remembrance of the handsome face and martial form of the major; but where and when these dim associations of the fickle memory had first been made, he could not tell.

The two walked out into the woods and strolled leisurely down to the river. Sheridan narrated the story of his adventures in the San Juan, even to his love in the mountain grotto.

"You are sure then a band of robbers are quartered in the ruins you speak of?" said St. Kenelm.

"There is not a single doubt of it. Zella told me they were robbers." She also gave me a history of her life, which went to prove that the captain of the gang is an inhuman monster who takes delight in torturing captives—men whom they capture in this country, and who have no designs whatever against them."

"Perhaps they are a party of Red Rob's men," said the major.

"I cannot think so, St. Kenelm," replied young Sheridan. "There is something about that boy, Red Rob, that should commend him to mercy. It seemed to impress me, from the moment I first saw him, that his life as a robber is clothed in a mystery. You will find it so yet."

"I have thought so, myself, Sheridan," a little surprised that Asa should express his own—St. Kenelm's—feeling exactly. "But I have never said so before. He takes it all so cool and unconcerned that it makes me think that there is an object back of the whole matter. It is not bravado. I have seen too much of such courage to be mistaken in the face of the man. But as to your wish, Mr. Sheridan, I will do my best to help you out. I will see Captain Rushton, and lay the whole matter before him, so that he can make his arrangements to go down to the ruins to-night, and capture the whole gang, and release the maid."

"If Zella's escape is only effected in safety, then I will be a happy man. Perhaps you know what it is to love, Mr. St. Kenelm. If you do, you can doubtless imagine how I feel in regard to Zella's situation. And then there is that old man, Walraymond, and Nathan Wolfe, the two companions of whom I was telling you—if I only could find them, or know that they were safe! I never met a man that I regarded with as great veneration as I did Basil Walraymond. He was a noble old man; a mysterious old man, whose tall figure and stern features—ah, by heavens! the speaker suddenly exclaimed, as though a startling thought had occurred to his mind, "I thought there was something familiar about your face, Albert St. Kenelm! It is the counterpart of the face of that noble old man, Basil Walraymond. I dare say you have Walraymond blood in your veins."

Albert St. Kenelm did not reply then. He appeared to be thinking. But at length he became agitated, and said:

"I was just thinking, Sheridan. I learned something yesterday, from our old negro servant, that has been in the family fifteen years, that I never knew before. It was concerning our family. I had considered my father dead for twelve years, but from the servant I learned that such a thing as his still living is possible. I was away at school, when, for a secret purpose of his own, he left home. The report reached us shortly afterward, that he had been shot as a confederate spy somewhere in Texas. I went out of school into the army, and as I never heard more of him, I supposed he was dead. He told Aunt Shady that, if he did not return inside of twelve years, she could break the secret to us—Octavia and I. Sheridan, that very man of whom you speak may be my father."

He may—he must be, St. Kenelm, having assumed the name of Basil Walraymond for the execution of that secret object for which you say he left home."

St. Kenelm made no response. They walked on some distance in silence, when Sheridan, glancing up at the western sky, said:

"It will be sunset ere we get back to camp, St. Kenelm."

"I want it to be dark. I do not want to see that boy shot."

Just then a voice hailed them. They glanced down the river and saw the tall form of a man, with a long, white beard, and his left arm in a sling, coming toward them.

An exclamation of joy burst from Sheridan's lips. He recognized the man—it was Basil Walraymond!

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SHERIDAN rushed forward to greet his old friend, whose coming was like one from the grave.

"My dear old friend, Walraymond, is it possible that we are permitted to meet you again?"

"Yes, yes, boy, thank Heaven!" replied the old man, in that same full, rich voice; "with a broken, mangled arm, I escaped from the robbers. But you, Asa, how did you manage to escape?"

"Father!—my dear father! do you not recognize me?"

It was St. Kenelm who uttered these words, as he rushed forward and grasped the old man's hand.

Walraymond, whose attention had hitherto been fixed upon Sheridan, now glanced at the face of St. Kenelm, when a cry of joy, that was almost a shout, burst from his lips.

"My boy! my Albert! and alive! Oh, God! this is more than I had ever expected," and the old man embraced his son, and wept like a child, overwhelmed with joy.

Several moments of silence ensued. It was broken by the father.

"Albert, I thought you were dead, else I should have gone back to Missouri. I saw the name of Albert St. Kenelm among the list of killed at the battle of Wilson's Creek. But it was a mistake—it was some other father's Albert. Oh, this is joy beyond measure, my son!"

"I had never expected to see you again in this world, father. It was only a few days ago that Aunt Shady told us the real truth concerning the kidnapping of sister Octavia, and your leaving home. From that time I began to live in hopes that you were still alive, and when Mr. Sheridan was telling me of Basil Walraymond, and said that I favored him in personal appearance, I thought it might possibly have been my father, who had assumed another name. It has proven to be the case."

Then Aunt Shady and that child are still living," the father asked.

"Yes; they are near here now. Three families of us moved from Missouri and Iowa, and settled in this valley. The Boswells and the Gilberts came with us."

"I know them—know them well," said the old man, his eyes sparkling with a childish joy, as he feasted them upon the face of his son—the child he had not seen for long years. "Albert," he continued, "your face is the same it was at sixteen, with the exception that it has grown more manly. I can see your dear mother's eyes and hear her voice in yours. And if I only had my other child, my Octavia, then would I be Aaron St. Kenelm again. I may yet find her, Albert, though God only knows in what condition. I have, after years

of trailing, found the devil that stole her away and left his child—the one you have known as Octavia St. Kenelm. He is leader of those outlaws, the Phantom Aztec. Ah, what a mockery! what an inhuman fancy that was, Asa! I recognized the villain almost the moment that I set my eyes upon him. But I said nothing—pretended ignorance of the startling fact. Yes, that villain and outlaw is Leopold Hamallado, the fiend who stole my child. He may have her yet, or know where she is, and if so, I will find her, God willing."

"She is there, Basil, without a doubt," exclaimed Asa Sheridan. "I know it now—she is there in the ruins, a noble, beautiful girl. She is called Zella. She liberated me and nursed and cared for me while I lay wounded in a mountain grotto not far from the ruins."

"God is merciful after all," murmured the old man. "I had begun to think that He had deserted me—that my prayers were in vain; but I know better now. It must be my child you seen, Asa—your sister, Albert—my Octavia."

"She had soft, blue eyes; fair complexion, light-golden hair," said Sheridan, "and a form of queenly beauty and grace, and a soul."

"Tis she—my Octavia!" cried the old man. "There is no doubt of it, Basil," continued Sheridan. "She sent me a book to read while I lay convalescing in the mountain grotto. In that book was a letter just written, although Zella knew it not. It was a cold, fiendish letter, if I may say so, written to 'My dear Aaron.' The writer spoke of a child that he had stolen—of another that he had left. He spoke of that child having grown to womanhood and that she was the image of Estelle, her mother, and—"

"That's enough, Asa, my dear young friend," broke in the old man, "enough to convince me that it is my child; but go on again. Tell me something more of my child—assure me it is no delusion."

"The name of the writer," continued Asa, "was Leopold Hamallado."

"That's the thief—the villain's name," interposed the old man.

"When Zella came back to the grotto, I showed her the letter. At first it seemed as though it would kill her. She did not want me to know that I was the guest of an outlaw's child. She knew, however, all about her life. The man whom she had always considered as her father had told her all a few days previous. The news bowed her spirit with grief and shame. The man would not tell her who her father was, nor where he resided. But as soon as I recovered from the effects of my wound, she was to flee the country with me. Once in a place of safety, I was to advertise in the leading papers for her friends. But, alas! The demon Hamallado found my retreat—found Zella there. She was placed in a room under lock and key, while I—well, it is a long story, that I will tell you another time, Basil. But Zella is held a close prisoner, and no telling what may befall her."

"She must be rescued," said the old man. "She will be, and to-night," said Sheridan.

The three turned and walked leisurely toward camp, and, as they moved along, the old man gave Asa and his son a history of his adventures in the tiger-pit, his escape therefrom, with a crushed and broken arm, and his trials and sufferings in the forest. He finally reached the village of the Navajo Indians in whose midst he received a warm welcome. Every kindness was bestowed upon him by those semi-barbarous people, and under the skillful treatment of an Indian doctor his arm healed rapidly. Still, it was not able to be out of the sling when he bid his Indian friends adieu.

As to their young friend, Nathan Wolfe, Basil knew no more than did Asa.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 266.)

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, JULY 10, 1876.

The SATURDAY JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates: Terms to Subscribers, Postage Prepaid: One copy, four months - \$1.00; one year - \$3.00; Two copies, one year - \$5.00. In all orders for subscriptions be careful to give address in full—State, County and Town. The paper is always shipped promptly, at expiration of subscription. Subscriptions can start with any date thereafter. All communications, subscriptions, and letters on business, should be addressed to BEADLE AND ADAMS, Publishers, 18 William St., New York.

Among the pleasant things which are in store for our Summer and Fall literary campaign is a

ROMANCE OF THE GREAT LAKES

By M. Quad, of the Detroit Free Press, viz.:

The Stolen Fortune: OR, A LIFE AT STAKE.

A downright good serial from the noted humorist, whose pen has made more smiles than Hogarth's pencil ever provoked, is certainly one of the treats that even the most abstemious reader will welcome. We have that treat to offer, and will put it within reach, in due season.

A very enjoyable and interesting series of papers, by GEORGE L. AIKEN, is commenced in this number. The actor life, in all its phases and vicissitudes, will come before the reader, both in interesting personal sketches and data of stage history. The writer has had a wide experience, as boy and man, on the American stage, and from that experience draws the material for these papers.

We have, in Mrs. E. F. ELLET's forthcoming serial (to commence in No. 281), viz.:

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a fine love story, and yet one full of adventure and dramatic situations. The romance of a young girl's career, in the struggle for fame as a singer, is made the thread of a very striking delineation of life in "artistic circles," as well as in the social world which deems brown-stone fronts and a carriage necessary to position and influence. The contrast with the "highly-seasoned" and intense narrative of Mrs. Fleming's "Victoria," is great, but it will have a charm of its own that will captivate all readers.

Sunshine Papers.

Centennially.

CENTENNIAL! What a troop of crowding visions that word marshals into array before us; and with what a motley throng are they peopled!

We behold our hero ancestors in their homespun clothes and with rifles that would well-nigh rival a modern howitzer, the well-to-do, frowning Tories, and the red-coated English soldiers; we gaze admiringly upon stately dames in stiff gowns and pompous ruffs, and revolutionary wives in linsey-woolsey dresses and white caps; with awe we mingle in the society of our earliest politicians, gorgeous in knee-breeches and wig and powder, and our modern politicians, proudly self-conscious of their familiarity with fraud, chicanery, theft and pugilism. We see representatives from every nation, and attire in all its newest styles, and, mayhap, though not given to such trifles, spend a few blissful moments in dreams of our next suit, anxious as to whether it shall trail seven inches or seven and a half! Indeed, the places, and events, and people, called to mind by that word—Centennial—are enough to make a respectable place of the moon, could they, with consent of the "man" in it, be transported thither.

And it is just delightful, the frequency with which the word is echoed here, there, and everywhere! It is one of our charming American characteristics to run every subject into the ground; a characteristic we uphold with heroic pertinacity, even if it carry us to the excess of rechristening the name of a criminal upon the latest agony in neckties or hats. Spelling-matches are under a spell of centennial; Big Bonanzas have dwindled into littleness, the Brooklyn law-suit has lost its charm of novelty, news is savors save it savors of centennialism, all things fair and false, marvelous and mysterious, exciting and erudite, have yielded their right to sway the public mind or interest the public reader, and bowed to a fate of utter insignificance before this latest rage *la Americaine*.

Everybody is preparing for the coming centennial; nay, even all nature is preparing—for is not asparagus so plentiful that it is scarce out for market, and are not strawberries so cheap that we do not care whether we have any or not? Next year will show a changed state of affairs; these same dainties will recognize the duty they owe to their country; and we may indulge an aristocratic relish for them when they are worth their weight in gold—greenbacks. We have centennial hotels, centennial drinks, centennial hats, centennial songs and gatherings, and signs and advertisements, and panniers and boots, and dinners and speeches. The centennial fever is beating so high, indeed, that many another cause must suffer. At all events, "come what will," everybody who is anybody will go to Philadelphia next year! Not to be at the centennial celebrations will be to ticket oneself for all eternity as a nobody! There is a saying—no doubt provincial in origin—"See Naples and die!" The motto of Americans, for 1876, will be "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, go to the centennial!"

One glorious feature of this throng preparing to move toward Philadelphia is that not a few among the crowd will be foreigners. So long and bravely have we displayed the national spirit and independence, inherited from the Revolution, in our attitude toward other peoples, that at last we are to find requital and be largely honored with the light of their countenances! After we have bowed to all

things foreign, and have smiled at French sneers and British insults; after we have called Paris and heaven synonyms, and adored European mustaches as abasely as if we had none in our own land, ought it not to be a season of unalloyed bliss to us "dreadful Americans" that our self-appreciation, dignity, and independence, are, at last, to meet their reward! And, oh! how we will dazzle and astonish our friends from over the Atlantic with our national recklessness and enthusiasm, pomp and glory, extravagance and display!

Summer has come in a tour with the state-lake June, and though we know she has come "too late and returns too soon," we restrain our feelings as we remember that with each of her fleeting, flower-blowing days we are a day's march nearer—the centennial. Already, in visions, we hear cargoes of gunpowder rending the air, see turrets of fireworks transfiguring the City of Brotherly Love into a suggestion of other regions, and behold the gorgeousness of American toilets, the marvels of American soil, and the pomp of American song and speech.

Let all nations under the sun, who would fitly realize our greatness, come to our centennial and learn how strikingly like we remain to our worthy ancestors who snapped their fingers at Europe, and wear homemade clothes, and have a first-class gossip over tea made of raspberry leaves!

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

DREAMING AND WORKING.

To dream away one's life may be all pleasant enough but not very profitable, and, in these times, we must look pretty closely after the dollars and cents, or we shall not have food for our mouths, fuel for our stoves or clothes for our bodies. We waste many a precious hour in sighing after the unattainable when we could be working hard for that which can be attained. We are too visionary, and dream of living in castles in the air when we might be working for a snug little farm-house. To dwell among clouds and have the rainbow for a playmate is intensely romantic, but a kitchen-garden is more practicable and a deal more profitable.

Am I descending from the sublime to the ridiculous? I think not. It's only showing you how much better a useful life is than a dreaming one. The Almighty has given us the tools, and we throw away in vain and idle dreaming—visions that are never realized and dreams that never come true!

Many a young girl has refused to work for a living because she has been told that she will marry some rich man and will then have nothing to do, so what is the use of her condescending to menial labor? Work soils her hands and spoils her complexion, all of which must be kept neat to gladden the eye of that rich husband who is sure to come, for has he not been talked of and dreamed about and, of course, she must not throw any obstacles in the way of her fate.

Somehow fate must have made some mistake, for, after years of dreary, desolate waiting, that wonderfully rich man doesn't happen along, and the girl is obliged to take up with John Hodge, a poor fellow with small pay. Her work is of the hardest drudgery. Doubtless so to her, because she has been so unaccustomed to it. She is but a novice at it, consequently her husband is forever growling at her because his clothes are not so nicely washed as his friends, scolds because the victuals he pays for are spoiled in the cooking, and his house looks more like a lumber-room than the habitation of human beings. If they quarrel, people will tell you it is from incompatibility of temper. I should tell you that while she has been dreaming he has been working. If you talk kindly to her and tell her that if she were to take more pains with what she does, matters might progress more smoothly, she will give you an indignant frown, and drawing herself up to her full height, she will exclaim, in scornful tones: "I wasn't brought up to work."

If you've got one atom of spunk in your body you will be justified in saying: "Well, it's a mighty great pity that you were not." Few there are who have the courage to say that they work for a living; work seems to be a hard word for them to utter. Not long ago I overheard a young girl remark: "Just think! When Mr. Barton came I was actually making pies. He found me cooking. What do you suppose he must have thought to have seen me at work? I was almost ashamed enough to hide behind the door."

"I don't know who the said Mr. Barton was, but if he was any sort of a being endowed with sense he would much rather have found the little lady working than dreaming.

We should be thankful that we have the work to do; it is this work that makes men and women of us and helps us along through life. Work keeps despondency away; it double-locks the door on melancholy, and fastens the latch against gloominess. If we were to dream over our troubles, our crosses and losses, we should find them harder to endure than if we to employ our minds about something more profitable.

A dreamer of a captain will never bring his ship safely to shore; the engineer who sleeps at his work will not be likely to guide his train aright, and those who dream that fortune will attend them without their seeking for it will find themselves woefully mistaken, and their awakening prove how fallacious are such visionary ideas.

"Work makes the man," and so does work. There should be no room in this world for those who are above working for a living, for they are below contempt. It is time to wake these dreamers up and set them to some task—to stir the dross in this great hive of a world, and show them if they will not be busy bees they mustn't clog the way of those who are willing to work. "Work and win" is a good motto, and it gains many a battle. What good will one do who dreams and loses? Not the smallest particle of an atom, except to serve as a "frivolous example" of the effects of laziness. *By Mrs. E. F. ELLET.*

SUMMER HINTS.

It is no wonder that people want to leave the sultry and heated streets of the city, and go into the country, when the summer comes, but the greatest mystery to be solved is why they should desire to go to the crowded watering-places and put up with such crowded rooms as they would be loth to occupy in their own mansions, and have to be so particular to keep dressed in elegant attire and pay ruinous prices for board.

Why not go into some quiet country-place and live at a farmer's house? If the host can not offer you all you would have at a first-class hotel he can offer you such sweet and fresh bread, butter, milk and vegetables as will make your mouth water only to look at them. You'll not be obliged to keep dressed up all the time—you'll not be thought less

of if you haven't a new coat or dress for every day in the week. Get on the line of some railway so that you'll not seem lost to civilization entirely, and where the daily mail will give you tidings of those whom you have left behind you in the city. Have an eye to a place where there are rivers and ponds to sail and fish in and noble glorious lawns to play croquet on.

The rising and setting of the sun in the country are two of the most magnificent sights to be witnessed, and they will cost you nothing.

But, if you do desire to board among the farmers you should leave your city airs at home. Become as one of them; they will like you better and treat you better.

For a change—if you want a good time—try a few hours' haying with the men and boys, and get some of that home-brewed beer under the shade of the "old oak tree." If you have never had a ride on a hay-cart, try it and you'll find it better fun than any ride you ever took at Long Branch or Saratoga.

If a rainy day should come, you'll not find it so very hard to remain in the house and watch the showers outside. This giving the face of Nature a good wash makes a grand sight, and one you cannot help enjoying. If you should tire of it—and I don't see how any one could—you will have a chance to read some of those books you have brought with you. Your room will be a large and airy one, neatly but comfortably furnished, and not a little close apartment in which you can scarcely move about or breathe in.

What rest do the numerous balls, hops and other exciting amusements give the tired frame—a frame that has become wearied with business cares and labors through several months in the year? When these entertainments are indulged in, a person returns as tired—if not more wearied—than when he started. The country, the real country, is what overworked bodies demand and what will prove the true panacea. Then why not secure such an invigorating medicine, a cure that will restore the color to faded cheeks and strength to tired limbs?

Such places as I have named are not hard to find; they are all around us. If any inconveniences are mixed with them they are of so trifling a nature as not to be worth mentioning, and in no lot in life can you find anything without some inconveniences. F. S. F.

THE VALUE OF NOURISHING FOOD.

It was owing, in a great degree, to the wretched condition of their commissariat that the Austrians were defeated at Austerlitz. *C'est la soupe qui fait le soldat.* "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we may die," is a motto which has often been denounced, and most justly, by Christian moralists. "Let us eat and drink well, lest to-morrow we die," would be a good substitute. The pleasures of the table are not the highest form of human enjoyment, it is true; but for all that, an oyster pie is a good thing when well made.

"A man," says Dr. Johnson, "who has no regard for his stomach, will have no regard for anything else." We fully agree with the great moralist, and we subscribe no less heartily to the saying of the French gourmand, who declared that the discovery of a new dish is more important than the discovery of a new star, because there never can be fishes enough, but there are stars enough already. It is a mistake to suppose that only rich men, with full paunches and empty pates, have a keen relish for the luxuries of the table.

The celebrated scholar, Dr. Carr, confessed a love for "hot lobsters," with a profusion of shrimp sauce. Pope was a decided epicure, and would lie in bed for days at Bolingbroke's unless he were told that there were stewed lamprays for dinner, when he would rise instantly and hurry down to table. Cleopatra is said to have owed her empire over Caesar as much to her suppers as to her beauty; and who can tell how much the love of the *Grand Monarque*, Louis XIV., for Madame de Maintenon was owing to the invention of the immortal outlets which bear her name? Cardinal Wolsey was conciliated by the good dishes on the Field of the Cloth of Gold; and Agrippina won Claudius by a receipt for dressing Spanish onions. Handel ate enormously; and when he dined at a tavern, always ordered dinner for three. On being told that all would be ready as soon as the company should arrive, he would exclaim: "Don bring up de dinner, prestissimo. I am de company."

Foolscap Papers.

A False Impression Corrected.

I AM a strange man. Since the day when I was a boy, I have stood in my own light. If I ever accomplished anything of importance, I was always the last to acknowledge it.

This disposition began when any question was asked concerning who robbed the hen's nest, or who broke the pitcher, or who dropped the cat in the well, or matters of that sort. I learned not to own up then. It grew upon me until it has become one of my main characteristics, and distinguishes me from other men who are distinguished.

I never learned to hide my light under a bushel with the bottom knocked out.

There is one little thing on my mind which I cannot rest under any longer. I have stood in silence until I am driven at last to speak out—much as I regret to do so.

For many years Columbus has received the thanks of the community for discovering America, and has enjoyed all the honors without blushing, but if that gentleman is living to-day, he will know that the credit never belonged to him. No, sir, I am at length, with great reluctance, compelled to confess that I am the true and only living discoverer of America!

There now, there is a great load off my mind, and it leaves a large vacuum. I have kept this a secret for many years, and lost money by it, with the most heroic determination and unselfishness. As Enoch Arden said on a certain occasion—"I'm him."

No one ever suspected it. I have been accused of a vast number of things which I didn't do, but was never accused of this.

People may be found who will even hesitate to believe this, when they are ready to believe any other story with the same number of cubic feet in it.

I discovered America in the year 1492 or 1493, if my memory serves me right, but dates have nothing to do with an event of such great importance as this.

I had always maintained that there was land on the other side of the Atlantic, because, I argued, if there was no shore on the western side, what would become of the water?—wouldn't it all spill out? Of course nobody could dispute such reasoning. Besides, my grandfather before me believed there was another continent to the west, because he used to

say he could hear the tune of Yankee Doodle coming over the water on a still evening, and he was not disputed, because he had the most remarkable ears for acuteness and size in all Europe. In fact, they have always been the ear-marks of the family ever since.

How to reach the new continent was what bothered me, and I thought if there was only land all the way across the sea, I could walk on it until I struck the New World. As there was none, I concluded, after considerable study, that it would be next to impossible to wade over, and gave the idea of that up.

I had read somewhere of the passage of the Hebrews through the Red Sea; liked the plan well enough, but it was hardly feasible with the means I had.

I hadn't funds enough to get a balloon and hire Professor Donaldson to accompany me, nor could I get a ship for the purpose. I offered the owner of a vessel one-half of the New World if he would let me have it for one year, but he wasn't a learned man, and remarked that he couldn't see it.

Is there no plan to discover America without going over the ocean? was the question I often was forced to ask myself, pausing for an answer.

I climbed the highest peaks on the coast, but could get no little bit of a glimpse of it.

I couldn't even procure a skiff, and seeing but little use of sitting down to wait till the Atlantic went dry or froze over, I resolved to take the first means that came in my way to cross, and it was a log—a common saw-log, not so very much of a saw-log either; and with this I boldly set sail out into the Atlantic, an umbrella answering for the purpose of a sail and to keep the rain off.

Never was there such a perilous undertaking before or previously, subsequently or since.

The log rolling all the time kept me half the time under, but animated with thoughts of the Declaration of Independence, the Fourth of July, the great Centennial Exposition, the Louisiana question, the Civil Rights' bill and the resumption of specie payments, I pursued my way by day although I tied up at night. The bark on that log was the only bark I saw on the route.

I ran out of provisions in a week, and for many months I chewed bark, and the only way I could get to drink was what I caught in my mouth when it rained—it is one of the handiest mouths to catch a small shower in that you ever saw.

One night while drifting along asleep I ran against something and awoke with a start. I found it was something floating in the water. I picked it up. I looked at it in my hands—examined it all over, and, *Eureka!* it was nothing more nor less than the American continent!

I put it gently back into the water; it wasn't quite as large as it is at present; and when morning broke I stepped upon it and took possession of it in the name of my wife.

There were no other men, women, children or human beings to be found, and no neighbors to annoy, and no one to bother about my business.

I set in and built the round tower at Newport, projected and completed the Erie canal, laid out many towns, invested in the Pacific Mail, started a daily with fifty thousand subscribers, bought several shares in the Atlantic cable, built a ship with my own hands and sailed back for Europe the same year to report my discovery, but fearing that people would take it as one of my little jokes I concluded not to say anything just then, and there is just where I made a mistake, for Columbus bumped up against the same continent in the meantime, and came home blowing about it.

I have kept still till now. Murder and eldorado will out. This is out, and I am at last satisfied.

I never claimed to have written "Beautiful Snow," or to be the man who struck old man Patterson. WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

MEN'S LATEST STYLES.

The Granville and Tudor are the fashionable standing collars. The American and Farragut are turned down, but are not so deep as those of last season. The Kenilworth cuff is reversible, round at one corner and square at the other. The Wallace cuff is round-cornered. The English cuff is perfectly straight, and the Creedmoor has the corners sharply cut off. Shirt-bosoms are very plain; the only ornamentation allowed is a three-cornered plait.

The newest ties are Windsor in blacks, purple and blue, two shades of purple, two of blue; others are in stripes of French gray, blue and gray, two shades of brown and *cafe au lait*. The new scarfs are basket-woven and of thick silk and are to be made up in Windsors; they are of all shades of a single color. Another style has large broken plaids in quiet colors. Handkerchiefs with fancy borders of light-tinted silk are again fashionable, and there is a later fashion of plain hemstitched pongee and foulard in delicate shades of pink, blue and salmon. Suspenders are made of watered silk, pearl-colored.

The fashionable glove for walking comes in shades of coral and bright canary; a very wide stitching in the back is done in all colors. Gloves for evening embrace all light shades. It must be added that full dress neckties are of white transparent lawn, made very narrow, and a fine white satin bias band is stitched on the ends.

Business suits are made up in English, Scotch and French cassimere; the patterns are plaids and broken checks. The most popular styles are a double-breasted saque and one and two-buttoned walking-coats. The vests corresponding to these are cut without collars; the pantalons are large and rather smaller at the foot than those of last season. Traveling coats are in Ulster shape, of some light fabric. White vests are double-breasted, and are made of duck, pique and striped Marselles. For summer wear, blue and black mixed chevrons and blue flannel are made in loose saques, or in one-buttoned walking-coats. For very hot weather entire suits of white duck will be worn to some extent.

HOW OTHERS SEE US.

"It is always filled with the choicest and most popular literature, and we are satisfied that after having tried it one year you would not exchange it for any of the weeklies now published."—*Democrat, Cincinnati, Ky.*

"Its columns are chuck full of choice stories and fine miscellaneous reading."—*Monticellonian, Monticello, Ark.*

"Its array of contributors, whose talent as story writers cannot be gainsayed, is proof of the publishers' assertions, while in startling headlines and dashing illustrations it is the peer of all competitors."—*Observer, Rosville, Ill.*

"A beautifully illustrated weekly of merit."—*Manfield, O. Liberator.*

"Among the best of its class and superior to the most."—*Ledger, Nevada, Mo.*

"We know whereof we speak when we say that the SATURDAY JOURNAL is the best of all literary journals. Let Americans support purely American papers."—*Coeymans, N. Y., Herald.*

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the inclosure, for such stamps are not returned.—Contributors are permitted in a package marked as "Book MS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy"; third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note paper as most convenient to editor and compiler, leaving of each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full page number.—A rejection by us means neither a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Contributors must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

These contributions we must decline, returning such as held stamps inclosed:—"From Dawn to Dawn"; "Tom Smith's Revenge"; "Surprising the Sioux"; "Advertisements on the Train"; "A Spiritman's Paradise"; "Big Game Explains"; "A Badger State Genius"; "The Call to Arms"; "Lois, the Witch";

We file for use: "The Lesson of the Sea"; "A Smile in a Frown"; "Weary"; "The Unbroken Trust"; "Marjorie Clymer's Master"; "A Young Heart's Venture"; "Mary Sands"; "A New Mission."

JOE RAIN, Osgood & Co., Boston, publish Bret Harte's books.

JRO. F. H. Will preserve your note, and send it to any applicant for bound volumes.

JACOB E. F. You greatly need the schoolmaster. About three years tuition will be necessary.

LOUIS W. Freight rates, at present, on third-class goods, to Detroit, are 40 cts. per 100 pounds.

SPENNER. A good rifle (repeater) will cost you \$60; a good revolver about one-quarter as much.

DORCAS. Martha Washington was a widow with two children when she married Washington. She had no children by him.

YOUNG TYPO. The cost of the matter supplied country papers, by the city offices engaged in that business, is at the rate of 12½ cents per 1,000 ems—about one-fourth the regular rates for composition—to say nothing of use of type, etc. The secret lies in the fact that the same matter does service for many papers.

M. S. "The heavy beating" on your left side is doubtless owing to the exertion in the German army by means of excitement and heavy exercise.—To a solution of your dream, see Beadle's Dime Book of Dreams.—A female cat is smaller and longer than the male. He is also known by his arrogant demeanor.

EBER E. N. We have had, thus far, eighteen Presidents of the U. S. Of whom thirteen were lawyers. The same proportion of lawyers to other professions holds good in our Congressmen. "The law" indeed seems a necessary st-ppling stone to political preferment.

NESTOR. The expression "grass widow" is a vulgarism for the law term *grace widow*—one who is a widow by grace of favor, not by death. The Roman Church insured, when a divorce was granted, the *vidua de gratia* (grace widow) the widow by grace. "Grass widow" now implies any woman separated, without divorce, from her husband.

CASPER STOLZ. A German does not escape a qualification for service in the German army by leaving his country. His residence here does not denationalize him. Although it may not be feasible for the Prussian government to reach him in foreign lands, his residence here is not a bar to his service. To disqualify himself for conscription in the Prussian army he must denationalize himself by swearing allegiance to some other power.

Mrs. KATZ B. I am usually owing to an excitable nervous condition. There are cases, however, where it is due to emptiness of stomach. Eat before retiring any light article of food, avoiding stimulants. Tobacco is especially bad for several hours before retiring, is a prudent—*Dr. Lewis* to the contrary notwithstanding. Try the remedy.

MARGERY M. We do not know of any "face fact" in this country. The face of a man or woman will have to become face-workers for a livelihood. It is a dreadful work, most ruinous to health and literally paid for at starvation prices. About \$10 an inch is paid for a face of a woman, and a few drops of ammonia solution. Shake. Apply two or three times a week. This is far better, as an emulsion, than nine-tenths of the simple ones now in vogue.

CHRON SORANO. A simple cure for your hoarseness is this: Take the whites of two eggs and beat them, add two spoonfuls of white sugar, grate in a little nutmeg, and then add a pint of lukewarm water. Stir well. Take this mixture, and be especially careful in going out at night to avoid any exposure of the throat. Singing makes the throat particularly sensitive, and singers cannot be too cautious in breathing night vapors.

DAKTHMOUTH BOY. The sea is not made salt by the deposits of salt in its depths. Fresh water carries down with it the salts of sodium, magnesium, chlorine, etc. These are left in the sea by the evaporation of the water constantly going on, by which the moisture of the atmosphere is chiefly sustained. After ages of this process of evaporation the sea has become heavily charged with salt, and as ages roll on this saline quality will increase until the water absolutely becomes dense with salt.

A "SHAKER" ON THE COAST. The usual remedy for fever and ague is quinine; but, when once the malaria is thoroughly in the system the best mode of cure is to get out of the ague atmosphere. In the South an infallible remedy is said to be *cowden seed tea*, viz.: one pint of seeds to be water; boil down to one pint of strained liquid, and drink one hour before the sun sets, and repeat the next night, for the sun passes the malaria in the air hangs low and thick. Sleep in dry quarters. A moist habitation will produce chills and fever almost anywhere.

FLOWER-FRIEND. If you water your window-plants with tepid water, keep the leaves free from dust, and give them a slight support if possible, you will find that they will flourish and run up but called Wandering Jew, which is such a beautiful ornament to a room.

T. W. F. James Watt, a Scotchman, was the inventor of the steam engine in the year 1764—at the age of twenty-eight; but it was not by invention, can claim the invention of the steam engine in its present state, as it is the result of improvement upon improvement with many additions since James Watt's time.

S. FANNIE B. Talking in one's sleep is a species of nightmare; avoid eating late suppers immediately before retiring, and sleep on your right side, and we think you will sleep peacefully and, in fact, also, keep your feet warm, for nightmare is sometimes occasioned by poor circulation of the blood.

NEWS AGENT. The State of New York has nearly one thousand newspapers in circulation, more than any other State in the Union; Pennsylvania ranks next, with six hundred and fifty, while Ohio has just one hundred less than Pennsylvania.

RAILROAD. It is stated, after an estimate made most carefully, that the average age of farmers is 65 years, of mechanics not employed in shops, 52 years, and those working indoors, 50 years; merchants, clerks, etc., have a lesser average, and professional men still less, while authors and artists have an average of about 44 years.

T. T. A good egg is made up of ten parts shell, sixty parts white, and thirty parts yolk; the white of an egg contains 86 per cent. of water, and the yolk 52 per cent.; the average weight of an egg is about two ounces.

REPORTER. There are as many as three thousand journalists employed on the hundred and eighty-two papers published in Paris.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ON HAND will appear next week.

"OUR JULY."

BY FRANK M. IMBRIE.

A cloud crept slowly up the eastern sky:
Twas darkly flushed, as with a wine-tint stain;
Strong, stalwart women watched it as it turned
To ominous crimson, flashing land and main.
Midst telling fire, that leaped from heart to hand,
With one convulsive throw was rent in twain.
And Liberty, traced as with lightning's fire,
Blazed 'gainst the heavens its blood-paid, death-
less name.

A nation grasped the staff that 'neath the sky
Floated its snow of peace; its vivid bars;
Then fluttered earthward with its heaven-bequest
An azure field, blazoned with quiescent stars;
Glad hearts flung wild its glory to the winds,
Echoing the cheers from lips of sea-bronzed tars.
Our dear old flag, born at a nation's birth,
A nation's pang that shook the very earth.

Far, far it waved to yonder-sunlight land,
Where pink magnolias threw their tropic shade;
Where fleecy fells the Southlands zephyrs fanned;
Where glow-worms lit the dusky everglade;
Where Ponce and Leon sought elixir springs;
Bove orange groves, in green and gold arrayed;
Where, from the mast-head of her anchored ships,
Old Charleston's harbor pressed it to her lips.

The Mississippi, from her upper fount,
Unfurled its column on the western breeze;
The red-man, startled from his forest haunts,
Saw spectral flashes bursting through the trees.
New England's song, with resonant joy and shout,
Vaunted their victory far o'er land and seas;
The North, reverberant with the clanging tone
Of iron-tongued music, shook from base to dome.

What said it then? A nation's freedom won!
Woe! Woe! As free as God's free light!
What says it now? A nation's freedom won!
Ununsullied in its glory, strength and might!
Arouse the loyal blood that, years ago,
Wrote—'INDEPENDENCE IN OUR COUNTRY'S RIGHT';
Ring in the zenith of our Country's pride
With shouts of triumph high on every side!

Not a Heroine.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

FLAT and dull and gray as all her life had been, thought Janet Real, as she stood looking across the marsh where the lake lay, rippleless, leaden, the rustle of the rushes where the wind stirred them only adding a dismal sound to a dismal scene. Hidden in the midst of the marsh crept a sluggish river; on the single knoll which rose in relief to that dead flat stood the only house in sight, a bare wooden structure upon which the wind and the weather had worked their will unhindered by paint or other protection, until the place had gained its single feature which was not repulsive—the transformation from new wood color to Vandyke brown, lichens and moss growing in patches all over the roof and fringing the eaves.

"One might better be dead," cried Janet, passionately, quite beneath her breath. Either great joy or great despair is apt to be voiceless. "I do believe I shall go down to that pool some day and make an end of it all. What is life worth with only this to look forward to forever?"

"You Janet," called a shrill voice. "Walk right in this minute, straight. Such a dawdler as you be, but you ain't a-goin' to shirk this inch! If I know it. You'll do every stitch of them duds if it takes you to pitch night, that I tell you now."

A hatchet-faced woman stood in the door, a woman you would know at a glance to be an old maid with all the "milk of human kindness" dried out of her nature long ago; one might fancy it had been sour milk in her case at its best. It was Hepsy Real, whose indomitable energy and sharp tongue had gained her notoriety among her country neighbors for miles around.

Janet turned slowly from her place under the lind tree and went in, a sullen look upon the face which might have been pretty, lit up by any pleasanter expression.

"There you be again, slower 'n doom. For goodness gracious' sake, do see if you can't earn your salt for once! If you took after our side, I wouldn't need to be forever nagging, but you're your mother over again, as do-less a critter as ever breathed."

"I'll thank you to let my mother alone, which is more than you ever do me," flashed Janet.

It had always been a bitter war between those two, Miss Hepsy and her dependent orphan niece, and who can wonder that under such an auspice the girl's nature had developed its worst phases? After that first retort, however, the vials of Miss Hepsy's wrath were poured out unmet by either check or remonstrance. Janet scorned to engage in a contest of words where she was sure to be worsted, but a red angry flame burned in her cheeks, and her lips set in a straight line of defiance, as she went about her distasteful task. She did not like work, and she seldom did it except with a kind of silent protest which never failed to arouse her thrifty aunt's ire. This afternoon, however, she moved with a vigor which fairly won her an approving glance at last. Muscles gleamed in snowy folds and the unsightly rolls in the clothes-basket dwindled; the last garment passed under the hot flat just as the odors of tea and biscuit began to dispense themselves throughout the house.

"Done," commented Miss Hepsy, in what was for her a gracious tone. "Come to supper then."

Janet declined the invitation; she did not want any supper; that was all, she supposed; then she was going out of doors, and aunt Hepsy needn't call her if it was dark.

She tied on her battered straw hat and went down the garden walk, where brilliant holly-hocks flaunting on either side were having their colors blotted out by the dusk.

"Off for one of her tramps," thought Hepsy Real, as she looked after her. The most curious girl I ever did see—not a bit like one of us," and that was Miss Real's bitterest trial in life.

Those long walks were Janet's only solace; in them she could sometimes outdistance that restless familiar which haunted all her days, that longing unutterable for something, anything, outside this monotonous existence of hers.

The west was crimson-streaked, but overhead and toward the east stars were twinkling faintly as yet against a canopy of silver-blue. Did they look down anywhere in this wide world upon a more desolate life than hers? Janet wondered. Far away by the wagon-road which skirted the sedge lands, making a circle to the leaden lake, where her reflection loomed back at her under the starlight dim and ghostly, the vapor from the marshes grotesquely exaggerating the indistinct semblance.

"Ah, you would like to tempt me," apostrophized Janet, as she looked down upon it. "I expect nothing less than to be driven to some day, but oh, for one single taste of life itself! I don't believe I could rest quietly even down there without it."

And all unknown to her, the change was coming even then.

She turned homeward by the marsh path at last, and midway there came to her across the wide space of wind-blown rushes a faint,

distant cry for help. She stopped, listened; it came again—"Hallo, help here!" and then a loud, shrill whistle twice or thrice.

The cry she understood; some one was lost in the swamp.

She lifted her voice and called in reply, without an instant's hesitation, and turned from the path in the direction from which the sounds came. The season had been a dry one, fortunately, but the way lay ankle-deep through water and mud after the first few steps. On, stumbling through the network of roots which made the only solidity of foothold there, stopping to call and listen, working her way more cautiously as the marsh began to deepen where it merged into the river. Surely she must be near the spot now; she called aloud again:

"Where are you?"

"Here," answered the voice, closer than she had expected. "But, good heavens! it can't be—a lady! Is the path there?"

"No. I heard you call, and came to help you if I can. You must be in the river, I think."

"I think so myself; waist-deep, and wouldn't have stopped there but I got hold of a root. I had no idea of which way to turn without submerging completely. It's safe to try to reach you, I suppose?"

He did not wait for a reply. He approached with a laborious movement, after what seemed an age gained the comparatively secure footing where she stood. She could distinguish that he was a young man under the starlight, nothing more.

"I beg your pardon," he said, lifting his hat before her. "I have given you trouble. I cannot make any adequate return of thanks, but since you have done this much, can you favor me still further by showing me the way out?"

The way out! Urged by the knowledge of a human being in distress, she had been enabled to reach the place, but to retrace the way was quite another thing. They might make the attempt and reach the path or solid ground in safety, or they might wander on until daybreak in those long low reaches, not to mention the discomfort of sinking to unknown depths when least expecting it. She explained briefly. The wilderness of scrubby growth on all sides afforded no landmark; it bewildered her when she tried to point out the direction she had come.

"If my horse was only here now," said he, regretfully. "I was going to Marshville"—the nearest town—"and made a cut across the country. Somehow I stumbled into this miserable bog. Prince grew frightened; I dismounted, thinking to pick my course better on foot, and he broke loose and deserted me to my fate. It might have been a harder one but for you. We must do something, that is certain; you are shivering, and no wonder, wet as you must be. His own teeth were chattering in the chill night-air. "Prince would come at my call if he were within hearing, but I doubt; I tried before."

Nevertheless he tried again, giving the loud shrill whistle she had heard, repeated many times but without result.

"It isn't the pleasantest dilemma in life, but we must keep moving if only to prevent freezing to death. Take my arm and let us make the attempt."

It was not romantic, plunging wildly through tangled rushes higher than their heads, their steps leaden-weighted, their progress so slow as to make the shortest way out of their difficulty seem terribly remote, but it was the way Janet's romance began. How the night's adventure might have ended but for help which came there is no telling. Help did come in shape of the deserter Prince, and standing upright upon his back his master made out a light twinkling dimly in the distance. Aunt Hepsy's light it proved to be when they reached it at midnight, and aunt Hepsy was found in such a state of dire alarm that Janet's course of procedure escaped rebuke.

"In the river, good land!" ejaculated the spinster, in as near an approach to consternation as she ever reached, when the story was told her. "It's nigh on to a miracle that you ever got out. Why, Nixon's boy was drowned there, last year, and him that could swim like a duck most times. If on't you had got out of your depth 'n' tangled in the weeds there, mister, a dozen men couldn't hev got you out alive."

"Then I owe my life to you," said the stranger, with an eloquent glance toward Janet. "That is a debt that I cannot hope to repay, but if your kindness will permit me to put up here for the remainder of the night, madam—" the engaging smile which ended the sentence was thrown away upon aunt Hepsy, but at that hour of the night, chilled, water-soaked and mud-invested as he was, she could not turn him from her door.

"You'll hev to stay, I s'pose," said she, grimly. "You want to take a hot bath and a cup of pepper-tea and git to bed, if you hev any idea of continuin' your journey in the mornin'."

The bath and the pepper-tea were both forthcoming, but, despite these effective agents, Mr. Ernest Tessey—such was the name he had given—was in no condition to rise from his bed when morning broke. Janet with her country training and perfect health was little the worse. Mr. Tessey was discovered able to speak in a hoarse whisper only, and the flush of fever was upon him.

"A pretty kettle of fish," grumbled aunt Hepsy, in utmost discontent. "We're bound to hev him on our hands for a week, but there's no use cryin' over spilt milk, so you, Janet, go to parin' them golden pippins, though how I'm ever to make my marmalade 'n' quince-sauce with hev'n! to nuss every straggle that chances along is more'n I see."

Due to the marmalade and quince-sauce was it that Janet was installed as Mr. Tessey's attendant a couple of days later, and after Miss Hepsy's bitter denunciations had broken the fever which threatened. You all know what came after well as I can tell. One of life's fairy dreams compressed in a few short days—days in which those two young people were thrown much together, in which they grew friendly and confidential as would not have happened in months of ordinary intercourse, days in which they read together, and talked together, and walked together when Mr. Tessey had arrived at that degree of convalescence, and under the glowing autumn sky, in the golden haze of the autumn weather, one at least tasted a realization of:

"There's nothing half so sweet in life as Love's young dream."

A dream which came to an end all too soon. The day arrived when Mr. Tessey had no longer an excuse for remaining, when looking pale and interesting still, handsome always, he made his adieu and departed.

"Will you welcome me when I come again, Janet?" he had asked, with one of those glances which said so much more than words, which set the girl's foolish heart throbbing tumultuously and gave her food for hope through many long days to follow.

Would she welcome him? would she welcome the sunshine and the sweet short summer-time in that gloomy marsh country? She had implicit faith in that promise implied that he would come again. Had he not in words said "I love you"—had he not all but said "Come with me"? But he never came.

He was not much worse than the majority of young men; he had only lightened that week in the lonely country house by the single pastime available, flirting with a tolerably pretty girl, whose simplicity was charming without having time to pall.

"Hope the little thing won't break her heart for me," thought Mr. Tessey, with a smile upon his lip as he rode away. "I observed the respectable old aunt was undisguisedly glad to be rid of me; had her fears for the little black-eyed one I suppose. 'Pon my word, I might have grown fond of her in a way under other circumstances, but broken hearts belong to a past age, and I don't wish Janet anything better than to forget me soon as I shall her."

Always the way: "Man's love is from man's life a thing apart; it's woman's whole existence," and so while Janet Real waited and hoped against hope, while months wore away in the lonely house which overlooked the lake, Ernest Tessey in his busy, worldly life, if he remembered her at all, did it in an amused sort of wonder if "the little Real had found a country swain yet to supplant him."

Six years later. The time, evening; the place, the parlor of a luxurious city mansion, a domed room all crimson-and-gold under streaming gaslight; the *dramatis personae* two, a man and a woman; the moment, that one all-absorbing—the moment after a lover's declaration and while he awaits his reply.

The man was Ernest Tessey, the woman Netta Delroy, the grandniece and heiress of old Hugh Delroy whose legal adviser Tessey had thought himself fortunate to become. That he was presumptuous in aspiring for Miss Delroy's hand no one knew better than himself. But:

"How is it under our control,

He had spoken and he awaited his answer. He fairly held his breath, his soul looked out through his eyes in an impassioned restraint, he loved this regal, beautiful woman with that great love of a lifetime, which whether he gained or lost must be a part of his being from this time henceforth.

He awaited his answer, and it came clear, distinct and ringing as a bell.

"Mr. Tessey, have you forgotten Janet Real?"

Sudden blank dismay overspread his face, sudden awful panic swept his soul. The searching glance she gave him brought him to himself.

"Janet Real, a somber little girl down in the Marshville district; yes, I do remember her, Miss Delroy. I am indebted to her for the trifling measure of having once preserved my life. Will you allow me to ask what bearing that may have upon—oh, Netta!" his voice broke, a great pathos thrilled it, a pity it was for herself, upon the very brink of his doom. He felt in that moment as if all hope had been cut away from him suddenly.

"You do remember her." Something like fine scorn tinged the clear voice there. "Perhaps you may remember also what she expected of you when you left her, what she has lived expecting from you through the six years since. I put it to you if it was quite honorable to win the regard of such an inexperienced child, to give her grounds for hoping much from you—oh, yes, you did, in words which might not have committed you to one worldly-wise as I am, but certainly to her! Was it honorable, I ask, to leave her without one word of explanation, even though your transitory—what shall I call it—infatuation, or perhaps interest, had passed?"

His face had taken on a dull pallor, but a gleam of deep earnestness shot athwart it there.

"How you may have learned that, Miss Delroy, I cannot even guess. I may have been culpable; I admit that I was in some degree; I was not generous enough to consider what was mere amusement to me might more seriously affect her; though what girl has not had her first dream of liking—love, then, if you prefer—and forgotten it? This I do declare most solemnly, I have never loved any woman but one, that one yourself. If you care for me, with one tithe of the love I have for you, that trifle of the past would never weigh against me."

"If I care?" An inscrutable look was upon her face. "I am going to be honest with you, Mr. Tessey. I care so much I would not have you offer me your hand and name while another has a claim upon you. Janet Real has; you owe her the proposal you have made to me. If you can come to me free by her rejection of you, I will listen then, not before."

"Is this final? Will nothing else suffice?"

He did not need to ask; he read how irrevocable her decision was in her face, and he went out of her presence with his purpose fixed. Janet Real might be married or dead; she might have outlived the sentiment of six years ago, or—she had been a tender-hearted little thing—she might take pity upon him and prove herself more generous than he had been to her.

And yet it was with a cowardly heart, a shrinking premonition, a terrible dread he could not shake off, that he rode up to the old bleak farm-house one week later. Evening was dropping grayly down, the dismal scene spread out as dismally as ever in the time past, and for all the change apparent in it or in Miss Hepsy Real as she appeared in the open door, it might have been but yesterday that he, a conquering paladin in that grim fortress, had ridden away.

The spinster's sharp glance had changed to one of astonishment.

"Why, it do be Mr. Tessey. Come right in; I'm glad to see you, to be sure. Yes, sir, Janet's to home; our's, too. She's gone down to the lake yonder; p'raps you may hev a glimpse of her from there."

"I see her. I will leave my horse and walk down there to meet her. I've a message to deliver from a—a friend of hers."

He threw the bridle-rein over the gate-post and hurried away to escape the look of surprise which he felt must have come into Miss Hepsy's face. On the lake shore a tall form with something scarlet draped about her was pacing up and down. In the gloom of the close-growing cypresses there he could see no more. She did not turn at sound of his footsteps; he paused more embarrassed than he cared to confess, half regretting that he had come, but stealing himself by one thought of Netta Delroy to make the plunge, to decide his fate then and there forever.

"Miss Real!"

The shape turned; what was there so strangely familiar in the poise, the motion, to leave him staring in amazement and doubt. She took a step forward and the gray light slanted over a fair, proud face he knew well, every lineament

of which was stamped indelibly upon his heart.

"Miss Delroy!"

"Or Janet Real, as you please, Mr. Tessey. You are surprised, but the explanation is a simple one. When my mother's uncle found me out and adopted me into his home, it was his desire I should be known by my mother's name. You have been at the house, and have seen aunt Hepsy, I presume?"

"Both."

He felt like a man in a dream, a nightmare crushing out any wild delusion of hope which for an instant had sprung up. If he looked to her for a sign of consciousness regarding what had passed between them, he looked in vain; that easy friendliness could only mean complete indifference; he could have borne her scorn or anger better. A choking sensation rose in his throat; he made the effort to rise before words came.

"Netta, oh, Netta!" It was the low, breathless cry wrung from him over a treasure lost. I scarcely dare ask it, but—forgive me! You have had your revenge in this, and I have found retribution to the fullest. It all endures, I suppose. Will you say you don't quite hate and despise me, if you can, and good-by! It will be something to remember in the years to come."

An inward pang followed his words; she had been left nothing but the knowledge of his faithfulness in the years past.

"You grant that I have had revenge, Mr. Tessey. Very well. There is one privilege we are taught it is better to exercise than vengeance—forgiveness. I do forgive you, Ernest, fully, freely, wholly now, if I never did before."

He looked at her, incredulous, yet eager.

"You forgive me, Netta! Am I mad to ask more, to ask what you would not grant a week ago?"

"But what Janet Real would have granted six years ago had you asked her. Take a return of your own words, Ernest; I have never loved but one, that one yourself."

You may say the result was better than he deserved, but it is only the way of the world; men are our masters, and as such have always the best of the bargain. She was not a heroine, that is certain; had she been she would have broken his heart and her own in meeting back to him the measure he had given; but, after all, was not her love the best?

Victoria:

THE HEIRESS OF CASTLE OLIFPE.

BY MRS. MAY AGNES FLEMING.
AUTHOR OF "THE DARK SECRET," "AWFUL MYSTERY," "THE RIVAL BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF WITH THE OLD LOVE.

The daintiest of little Swiss clocks on a gilded mantelpiece was beginning to play the "Sophia Waite" preparatory to striking eleven, and Lady Agnes Shirley looked up at it with a little impatient frown. The Swiss clock and the gilded mantelpieces were in the breakfast-parlor of Shirley House; and in a great carved arm-chair, cushioned in violet velvet, before a sparkling coal fire, sat Lady Agnes. She had just arisen; and in her pretty morning-dress of a warm rose-tint, lined and edged with snow-white fur; the blonde hair, which Time was too gallant to touch with silver, and only ventured to thin out a little at the parting, brushed in the old fashion off the smooth, low forehead, and hidden under a gauzy affair of black lace and ribbons, which she was pleased to call a morning-cap; a brooch of cluster diamonds sparkling on her neck, and her daintily-slippered feet resting on a violet velvet ottoman, she looked like an exquisite picture in a carved oak frame. At her elbow was a little round stand, covered with the softest of damask, whereon stood a porcelain cup half-filled with chocolate; a tiny glass, not much larger than a thimble, filled with Cognac; a little bird swimming in rich sauce, and a plate of oyster-pate. But the lady did not eat, she only stirred the cold chocolate with the golden spoon, looked dreamily into the fire, and waited. Last night, before the ball broke up, she had directed a certain gentleman to call next morning and discuss with her a certain important matter; but it was eleven, and he had not called yet; and so she sat with her untasted breakfast before her, and waited and thought. She thought of another morning, more than eighteen years ago, when she had sat and waited for another young gentleman, to talk to him on the very same subject—matrimony. Eighteen years ago she had found the young gentleman obstinate and refractory, and herself outwitted; but then all young gentlemen were not as self-willed as he, and she had great hopes of the particular one waited for this morning. So, tapping her slippered foot on the ottoman, and beating the devil's tattoo with her spoon, she alternately watched the Swiss clock and the red cinders falling from the grate, until the door was flung open by a footman, and Mr. Cliffe announced in a stentorian voice. And hat in hand, Leicester Cliffe stood before her the next moment.

"Punctual!" said Lady Agnes, glancing at the timepiece, and languidly holding out her hand. "I told you to come early, and it is half-past eleven o'clock!"

"Ten thousand pardons; but it is all the fault of the people of the hotel, I assure you. I gave orders to be called at ten precisely; but it was nearer eleven when the waiter came. Am I forgiven?"

"You've kept me waiting half an hour; and I detect people who make me wait; but I think I can forgive you. Take a seat near the fire—the morning is chilly."

"And how are the young ladies?" inquired Leicester, as he obeyed; "not over fatigued, I trust, after the ball?"

"I cannot answer for Margaret, who is probably asleep yet; but Victoria came to my room fully two hours ago, dressed for a canter in the park. Quite true, I assure you, my dear Leicester—it is the most energetic child in the world! Will you have a cup of coffee?"

"Not any, thank you. I have breakfasted. Miss Shirley is certainly a modern miracle to get up so early; but, perhaps, to-day is an exception."

"Not at all! Victoria is an early bird, and constantly rises at some dismal hour in the early morning, and attends church—convent habits, and so on!" said Lady Agnes, with a shrug and a short laugh. "Shall I ever forget the first morning after her arrival at Castle Cliffe, when, on going to her room at sunrise, I found her making her bed, like any chamber-maid! I believe you never saw her before last night."

"I never had that pleasure; but I knew her immediately. There is a picture at the castle of a small child with blue eyes and long curls, and it is like her, only Miss Shirley is far lovelier."

Lady Agnes lifted her keen eyes from the fire with a quick, eager sparkle.

"Ah, you think her lovely, then?"

"Lady Agnes, who could look at her, and think otherwise?"

"You are right! Victoria is beautiful, as half the young men in our set know to their cost. Ah, she is a finished coquette, is my handsome granddaughter! Who do you think proposed for her last night?"

"I cannot imagine."

"The young Marquis de St. Hilary, whom she knew long ago in France. He spoke to me in the handsomest manner first, and having obtained my consent—for I knew perfectly well what the answer would be—proposed."

"And the answer was—?" said Leicester, with a slight and conscious smile.

"No, of course! Ha! I dreamed for a moment it could have been anything else, rest assured the Marquis de St. Hilary would never have offered his hand and name to my granddaughter. There is but one name I shall ever be glad to see Victoria Shirley bear, and that is—Cliffe!"

"Now it is coming!" thought Leicester, suppressing a smile with an effort, and looking with gravity at the fire.

Lady Agnes, leaning back in the violet velvet arm-chair, eyed her young kinsman askance. Hers was really an eagle glance—sharp, side-long, piercing; and now she was recognizing the enemy like a skillful general, before beginning the attack. But the handsome face baffled her. It was as emotionless as a waxed mask, and she bent over and laid her hand on his with a slight laugh.

"What a boy it is! sitting there as unreadable as an oracle, without a sign; and yet he knows all!"

"All what, Lady Agnes?"

"Nonsense! I am not going to have any fencing here; so sheathe your sword, and let us have the whole thing, and in plain English. Of course, Sir Roland has told you all about it."

"Madam," stammered Leicester, really at a loss.

There, don't blush! Victoria herself could not have done it more palpably. Of course, I say Sir Roland has told you the whole matter; the object of my invitation in short. Yes, your face tells it; I see he has!"

"Lady Agnes, I have read your letter."

"So much the better! I need not waste time making a revelation; and now, what do you think of it?"

"Your ladyship, I have not had time to think of it at all. Consider, I have seen Miss Shirley last night for the first time!"

"What of it? On the continent, the bridegroom only sees his bride when they stand before the altar."

"But this is England, Lady Agnes, where we have quite another way of doing those things! I am a true-born Briton, and Miss Shirley is—"

"French to the core of her heart, and with an implicit faith in the continental way of doing those things, as you call it. You saw her last night for the first time. True. But the light was satisfactory, I trust."

"Eminently so, yet—"

"Yet what?"

"Lady Agnes," said Leicester, laughing, yet coloring a little under the cold keen gaze of the woman of the world, "there is an old-fashioned prejudice in favor of love before marriage, and you will allow we have not had much time to fall in love with each other."

"Bah!" said Lady Agnes, with supreme scorn. "Is that all? How many times in your life, my dear Leicester, have you been in love before this?"

Leicester laughed, and shook back his fair, clustering hair.

"It is past counting, your ladyship!"

"And how many of those ladyloves have you married?"

"Rather a superfluous question, I should think, Lady Agnes."

"Answer it!"

"Not one, of course!"

Again Lady Agnes shrugged her shoulders, with her peculiar scornful laugh.

"We have met, we have loved, and we have parted! That is the burden of one of Victoria's songs; and, of course, your heart was broken long ago, after all those sharp blows upon it!"

"I am not aware that it is! It feels all right—beats much the same as usual! I never heard of a man with a broken heart in all my life!"

"Neither have I; and so, Mr. Cliffe, as you've had love enough without marriage, suppose you try marriage without love; that sentiment will come afterward, believe me!"

"You know best, of course! I bow to your superior judgment, Lady Agnes!" said Leicester, bending to hide an irrepressible smile.

"Love is all very fine, and excessively useful in its place," said Lady Agnes, leaning back with the air of one entering upon an abstruse subject; "the stock and trade with which poets and authors set up business, and without which I don't know how the poor wretches would ever get along. It is also well enough in real life; for you must know I believe in the existence of such a feeling when in its proper place, and kept in due bounds, but not at all indispensable to the happiness of married life. For instance, I made a *marriage de convenance*; Dr. Shirley was twenty years my senior, and I had not seen him half a dozen times when I accepted him, and, of course, did not care a straw for him in that way, yet I am sure we got along extremely well together, and never had a quarrel in our lives. Then there was Sir Roland and your mother. You know very well they married, not for love, but because it was an eminently proper match, and she wanted a guardian for her son—yourself; yet how contentedly they lived together always. Oh, my dear Leicester, if that is all your objection, pray don't mention it again, for it is utterly absurd!"

"So I perceive," said Leicester, dryly.

"But is your ladyship quite certain Miss Shirley will agree with you in all these views? Suppose she has what is called a prior engagement?"

Lady Agnes drew herself up, and fixed her cold blue eyes proudly on his face.

"The idea is simply absurd! Miss Shirley has nothing of the sort! My granddaughter, my proud, pure-minded Victoria, stoop to such a thing as a clandestine attachment for any man! Sir, if any one else had uttered such an idea, I should have considered it an insult!"

"Pardon! I had no intention to offend."

"Perhaps"—still with hauteur—"perhaps you judge her by yourself; perhaps you have some prior attachment which causes all those scruples. If so, speak the word, and you have heard the last you will ever hear from me or any one else on this subject! The heiress of Castle Cliffe," said Lady Agnes, a flush crimsoning her delicate face, "is not to be forced on any man!"

Oh, Barbara! his heart went back with a bound to the cottage by the sea, but never before had your power over him been so feeble.

What would this satirical kinswoman—this

grand and scornful lady—say, if he stood before her like a great schoolboy, and blushing blurted out his grand passion for the fisherman's daughter. His cheek reddened at the very thought; and feeling that the eagle eyes were piercing him like needles, he looked up and confronted them with a gaze quite as unflinching and almost as haughty.

"You are somewhat inconsistent, Lady Agnes. You gave me *carte blanche* a moment ago to love as many as I pleased!"

"I gave you absolution for the past, not indulgence for the future! With Leicester Cliffe and his amours I have nothing to do, but the husband of my granddaughter must be true to her as the needle to the North Star!"

He bowed in haughty silence. Lady Agnes looked at him searchingly, and calmed down. "If we commence at daggers drawn," she said, still laughing her satirical laugh, "we will certainly end in war to the knife! Live ten to me, Leicester, my nephew, the last of the Cliffes, and learn why it is that this marriage is so dear to my heart—why it has been my dream by day and by night since I first saw Victoria. Some of the noblest names in the peerage have been laid this winter at my granddaughter's feet, and by me rejected—she, the most dutiful child in the world, never objecting. You know what an heiress she is—worth at least twenty thousand a year; and do you think I would willingly let the millions of our family go to swell the rent-roll of some impoverished foreign duke, or spendthrift English earl? You are the last, except my son and Sir Roland, bearing the name of Cliffe; they will never marry, and I don't want a name that existed before the Conqueror to pass from our branch of the family. By your marriage with my granddaughter, the united fortunes of the Cliffes and Shirleys will mingle, and the name will descend, noble and honored, to posterity, as it has been honored in the past. It is for you to decide whether these hopes are to be realized or disappointed. Victoria has no will but that of her natural guardians, and your decision must be quick; for I'm determined she shall leave town engaged."

"You shall have my answer to-night!" said Leicester, rising and taking his hat.

"That is well! We go to the theater to-night, and you may come to our box."

"I shall not fail to do so! Until then, adieu! *au revoir!*"

Lady Agnes held out her hand with a gracious smile, but he just touched it, and ran down-stairs. As he passed through the lower hall, the library door stood ajar; he caught sight of a figure sitting in the recess of a window. It was Margaret, holding a book listlessly in one hand, while the other supported her cheek. She was looking out at the square, where a German band was playing "Love Not," and her face wore a look so lonely and so sad that it touched him to the heart. If Leicester Cliffe had one really pure feeling for any human being, it was—strangely enough—for this plain, silent cousin of his, whom nobody ever noticed. He went in, and was bending over her, with his fair hair touching her cheek, before she heard him.

"Maggie—little cousin—what is the matter?"

She started up with a suppressed cry, her dark face turning, for a moment, brightest crimson, and then white, even to the lips.

"Oh, Leicester!" she cried, laying her hand on her fast-throbbing heart; "how could you startle me so?"

"Did I! I am sorry! What a nervous little puss it is! Her gracious majesty, up-stairs, told me you were asleep."

"For shame, sir! Have you been with Lady Agnes?"

"Oh, haven't I?" said Leicester, making a slight grimace. "What are you doing here alone? Why are you not out riding with your cousin?"

"I prefer being here. Won't you sit down?"

"No! What makes you so pale? I remember, long ago, when we played hide-and-seek together in the old halls of Castle Cliffe, you had cheeks like rose berries, but they are as white as those lace curtains now."

"Oh, rare, pale Margaret! On, fair, pale Margaret!"

He glanced up for a moment at the handsome face bending over her, and then stooped lower over her book, turning almost paler than before.

"My good little cousin, tell me what it means."

"Nothing!"

"I know better! Young ladies don't go about like white shadows, with as much life in them as one of those marble statues, for nothing. Are you ill?"

"No!"

"Are you happy?"

"Yes!"

"Is that grand sultana up-stairs good to you?"

"Very."

"And the princess royal—how does she treat you?"

"Cousin Victoria is like a sister."

"The what, in Heaven's name, has crushed all the life out of the little Maggie Shirley I romped with long since? Do you know you're but the ghost of your former self, Maggie?"

She did not speak—she only held the book closer to her face, and something fell on it, and wet it. There was a tap on the door, and a servant entered.

"Miss Margaret, my lady wants you to come and read to her."

"I must go, Leicester. Good-morning!"

She was gone in an instant, and Leicester, feeling there was a screw loose somewhere, and like all of his stupid sex, too blind to guess within a mile of the truth, went down the steps, took his horse from the groom in waiting, and dashed off through the Park. As he entered Rotten Row, he was confronted by three equestrians: Colonel Shirley, his daughter, and Tom. The image of Victoria had been before him all the way, flashing in lace and jewels as he had seen her last night, but now she dawned upon him in quite another vision of beauty. From her childhood the girl had taken to riding as naturally as she had to sleeping, and she sat her spirited Arabian with as easy a grace as she would have sat on a sofa. Nothing could have been more bewitching than the exquisitely-fitting habit of dark blue cloth; the exuberant curls confined in a net, seeing that curls under a riding-hat are an abomination; her fair cheeks flushed with exercise, the violet eyes sparkling and laughing with the very happiness of living on such a day, and the rosy lips all dimpled with glad smiles. She touched her black-plumed hat coquettishly, a *la militaire*, with her yellow-gauntleted hand, as the young gentleman bowed before her.

"Well met, Cliffe!" said the colonel; "we were just speaking of you. Come home and dine with us."

"Thanks. I regret to say I am already engaged."

"To-morrow, then! Have you any engagement for to-night? We are for the theater."

"None; and I have promised her ladyship to drop into her box. Miss Shirley, I need not ask if you have recovered from the fatigue of last night; you are as radiant as a rose."

"Oh, I am never fatigued!" said Miss Shirley, with her frank laugh. "Papa, come; Claude is impatient. *Au revoir*, Mr. Cliffe."

She looked back at him with a saucy glance, waving her hand, and the next moment was dashing away out of sight. And Leicester Cliffe went to his hotel to dress for dinner, with "a dancing shape, an image gay," haunting his mind's eye, to the exclusion of everything else—the princess royal on horseback.

The dinner-party at Lord Henry Lisle's was a very noisy and prolonged affair. Indeed, Leicester, thinking of the theater, wished them all at Jericho a thousand times before it was over. The Rose of Sussex was toasted so often in punch and port, thick and sweet, that the whole party were rather glorious when they issued forth—Leicester excepted. Remembering his engagement, he had not imbibed quite so much of the rosy as the rest, and was all right when he presented himself, according to order, at the stage-box belonging to the Shirleys. Lady Agnes was there, as usual, in a splendid toilet; beside her sat Vivia, looking like an angel in moire antique and emeralds, with a magnificent opera-cloak half-dropping off her bare and beautiful shoulders. Tom was leaning devotedly over her chair, talking nonsense very fast, at all of which Miss Shirley was good-natured enough to laugh; and Margaret, very simply dressed, according to custom, sat very still and quiet under the shadows of the curtains. The colonel was absent, and Lady Agnes received him with gracious reproach.

"Lazy boy! The first act is over, and you are late, as usual! Such a charming play—'Undine!' Tom, hold your tongue, and use your eyes, or else go and talk to Margaret! There she sits, like little Jack Horner, alone in the corner, moping!"

Vivia turned her beautiful face and welcomed him with a bewildering smile; and Tom, deaf to his aunt's hint, merely moved aside a little; while the new-comer bent over her chair to pay his respects. The wine he had been drinking had merely raised his spirits to an excellent talking-point. Vivia was a good talker, too; and in ten minutes conversation was in full flow.

"Have you ever seen that play—'Undine'?" she was asking.

"Never."

"Ah! it is beautiful! I love it, because I love 'Undine' herself. Do you know, monsieur, I took a fancy to study German first for the purpose of reading 'Undine' in the original? Look! the curtain is rising now!"

It went up as she spoke, and showed the knight battling with the spirits in the enchanted wood. Leicester looked at the stage and smiled.

"This first visit to the theater since my return to England reminds me of the first time I ever visited a theater at all."

"Do you remember it? It must have been a long time ago?"

"It is. It is eighteen years. I was in a box with Lady Agnes and my mother; and, opposite, sat Sir Roland and your father, then Lieutenant Cliffe, Lord Lisle and that yellow lawyer—a money-lender he was then—Mr. Sweet."

She made a vivid impression on me—the lights, the gay dresses and the brilliant scenery. I forget what the play was, but I know the house was crowded, because it was the last appearance of a beautiful actress, Mademoiselle—"

He had been speaking with animation, but he stopped suddenly; for the beautiful face was crimson, and there was a quick uplifting of the haughty head, which reminded him forcibly of Lady Agnes.

"Mademoiselle Vivia!" she said, lifting her violet eyes with a bright free glance to his face. "My mother—my beautiful mother, whom I have never seen!"

"Miss Shirley, I did not mean—I never thought! Can you forgive me?"

"Out of my heart, monsieur. See, there is 'Undine'!"

She leaned forward. A tumult of applause shook the house, and he bent over to see. There was the sea-coast and the fisherman's cottage, and there from the sea-foam rose "Undine," robed in white, with lilies in her hair. It reminded Tom Shirley of the "Infant Venus"; it reminded Leicester Cliffe of Barbara—the same, though he did not know it. In the daze of the music, and lights, and the girl beside him, he had not thought of her before; and now her memory came back with a pang, half-pleasure, half-pain. Somehow, Vivia's thoughts, by some mysterious rapport, were straying in the same direction too.

"Monsieur Cliffe," she said, so suddenly lifting her violet eyes that he was disconcerted, "do you know Barbara?"

The guilty blood flew to his face, and he drew back to avoid the innocent eyes.

"I have seen her."

She laughed a gay little mischievous laugh. "I know that! Tom told me all about the May Queen, and how you were struck. I don't know how it is, but 'Undine' always reminds me of Barbara."

"Does she?"

"Yes. Barbara was a little water-sprite herself, you know; and I wonder she has not melted away into a miniature cascade before this. Did she ever tell you she saved my life?"

"No!"

"Proud girl! Spartan Barbara! Is she as handsome as she was long ago?"

"She is very handsome."

Mentally she rose before him as he spoke in her mimic chariot, crowned and capered, with eyes shining like stars, and cheeks like June roses; and he drew still further back, lest the violet eyes should read his guilt in his face. She drew back a little herself, to avoid the fire of longuettes directed at their box—some at the great Sussex heiress, others to the noble and lovely head alone.

"'Undine' reminds me of her," she went on, "only 'Undine' died of a broken heart; and if Barbara were deceived, I think—"

She stopped with a blush and a laugh.

"Go on, Miss Shirley."

"I think—but I am foolish, perhaps—that she would have revenge; that she would have it in her to kill her betrayer, instead of melting away into the sea of neglect, and being heard of no more."

He turned pale as he looked at the stage, where stood the false knight and his high-born bride, while Undine floated away in the moonlight, singing her death-song. Again Vivia leaned forward to look.

"Poor, forsaken 'Undine'! Ah! how I have half-cried my eyes out over the story! and how I hate that treacherous Hildebrand! I could—could almost kill him myself!"

"Have you no pity for him?" said Leicester, turning paler, as he identified himself with the condemned knight. "Think how beautiful

Bertrada is; and 'Undine' was only the fisherman's daughter!"

"That makes it all the worse! Knights should have nothing to do with fishermen's daughters!"

"Not even if they are beautiful!"

"No; eagles don't mate with birds of paradise."

"How haughty you are!"

"Not at all. You know the proverb, 'Birds of a feather.' Poor Barbara! I do pity her for being poor!"

"Does wealth constitute happiness?"

"I don't know; but I do know that poverty would constitute misery for me. I am thankful I am Victoria Shirley, the heiress of Castle Cliffe, and I would not be any one else for the world!"

She rose, as she spoke, with a light laugh. The curtain had fallen with the last scene of "Undine," and Lady Agnes was rising, too.

"Where are you going?" asked Leicester. "Will you not wait for the afterpiece?"

"A comedy after 'Undine'! How can you suggest such a thing! Oh, never mind me. I will follow you and grandmamma."

So Leicester gave his arm to grandmamma, and led her forth, Vivia gathering up her flowing robes and following. Tom, who had long ago retreated, sulky and jealous, from the field, came last with Margaret.

The carriage was at the pavement; the footman held the door open; the ladies were handed within—Margaret wrapping her mantle around her, and shrinking away into a corner the moment she entered.

Vivia leaned forward, and held out her snowy hand, with the smile of an angel.

"Good-night, monsieur. Pleasant dreams!"

"They will be enchanting. I shall dream of you!"

Lady Agnes bent forward with a look of triumph.

"And your answer, Leicester. You were to give it to-night. Quick! Yes or no."

"Yes!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 263.)

Tiger Dick:

OR, THE CASHIER'S CRIME.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED.

HEDGED in on every side by lowering clouds of suspicion, expecting an attack from every quarter, Fred gazed upon the draft in stupefaction. A wave of crimson surged up to the roots of his hair; and the father seeing it, and interpreting it as the confusion of detected guilt, groaned aloud. Then it receded, leaving him pale as death, with a leaden ring about his lips.

Shrinking a step backward, and still gazing upon the paper, as if with fascination, he said, in a bewildered, frightened voice:

"I—sign—that—draft? I do not understand you. What do you mean?"

"Look at him!" cried the old man, in a rasping voice. "It is proved as clear as day! And yet he stands here before us, with the face of an angel of innocence, save for the pallor of confounded guilt, and says: 'I—sign—that—draft? I do not understand you. What do you mean?'"

The stinging, incisive sarcasm of the old man was emphasized by his leaning forward and shaking his silver locks, as he hurled these bitter words at his grandson.

To Fred, it seemed as if he were being drawn steadily, irresistibly, into a maelstrom of suspicion. He turned to his father with a wild appeal.

"Father! father! what is this?"

"Oh, my boy! my poor, poor boy!" groaned the distracted parent.

"Believe me, father, I am innocent!" cried Fred, with tears of despair in his eyes.

"Prove it, Frederick—prove it!"

"How can I? I know not of what I am accused."

"Oh, saintly innocence!—infantile ignorance!" sneered the old man.

Fred turned upon him as if stung.

"What is my crime?" he demanded.

"What is your crime?" repeated Mr. Carrington; and drawing a deep breath, and summoning all the energies of his nature, he thundered at his grandson the words: "Drunkenness—gambling—forgery—complicity in the plundering of the father who gave you being! I say nothing of crimes that the law does not reach, but none the less infamous on that account—base treachery and ingratitude, and a persistent effrontery of falsehood without parallel!"

Stunned by this arraignment, Fred reeled backward and leaned gasping against a desk.

"Oh, my son," moaned the wretched father, "I could have forgiven you all—all but the ingratitude! Have I ever denied you anything that was for your good? Had you come to me, I would have doled out my blood, drop by drop, to secure your happiness. And now to have you turn upon me—oh, God!"

"Father! father!" pleaded the son, with outstretched hands.

But he waved him off.

"Go, boy, go! I cannot bear to look upon you!"

At that, Fred drooped, as under a blight.

"And May, even May, believes me guilty! I saw it in her face!" he said, in a husky voice.

And then, blinded with tears, and with an awful look of despair in his face, Fred Powell groped his way to the bank door and passed out and down the street, he knew not, nor cared, whither.

Cecil Beaumont turned and followed him with his eyes. Outwardly, he was grieved to the soul; but beneath the mask, the laughing devil capered and jibed in frantic glee.

As the door closed upon the bowed form of the outcast son, all the iron of Harold Carrington's nature melted away; and bending until his head rested upon the shoulder of the stricken father, and his arm lay along his neck, and while his own voice quavered and broke, he said:

"Bear up, John; bear up. We have shouldered many a burden together; and we can bear this between us, can't we?"

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW SHE TRUSTED HIM.

WHEN Fred Powell left the presence of his father, it was with a feeling of stunned, dizzy bewilderment. Then a chilling sense of awful desolation settled down upon him, enveloping him like a cloud. Without purpose, he plunged into the ebb and flow of the bustling street, instinctively seeking that relief which the burdened spirit finds in physical activity.

People whom he passed turned to look again at his white face and wild air; but he was so much engrossed by the fiery tumult within,

that he did not heed them, until one stopped and slapped him on the shoulder, as he was about to pass on.

"Hallo, Fred!" cried the voice of Billy Sanderson; "what's the row? Demmy, if you don't look like a three days' corpse, acting as chief mourner at its own funeral. Gads, man, you've got a face on you to frighten children into saying their prayers twice a day, regular. Come and have something to tone up your nerves."

"No, no, Sanderson; nothing for me," said Fred, with a shudder; and with a hurried "Good-morning," he passed on.

"Now, if I'm any judge of beauty," mused the "decoy duck" following Fred with his eyes, "the false key that is supposed to have admitted the burglars, is none other than the key that so mysteriously disappeared from the possession of William Sanderson, book keeper, on the same eventful evening. But what makes the gentle Freddy look like the ghost of Hamlet, or like a candidate for a lunatic asylum—that's what I want to know. Well, any way, I've got a greenback, if not a silver lining to my cloud; so—Up in a balloon, boys, up in a balloon!"

And he went whistling down the street.

After that, Fred caught the curious eyes fixed upon him; and with an awful haunted feeling, as if his degradation, emblazoned on his forehead, drew the finger of scorn from every quarter, he fled from his fellow men, out of the thronged thoroughfares, to the quiet streets of the suburbs, and then on to the deserted country road, bordered here by umbrageous woods, and there by waving grain, or tasseled maize, flashing back the sunlight from its thousand leaves; and, seen through breaks in the timber that followed the watercourse, the broad stretch of level prairie, dotted with farm houses; and beyond all, the hills, looming blue in the distance.

Instinctively he avoided his home, and passed on, until he found himself in the vicinity of her who was dearest on earth to him. Then, with a shudder, he plunged into the depths of the wood, taking a path that carried him on beyond, and finally emerged upon the river bank. Here he threw himself down, and gave himself up to moody thought.

Presently there were sounds of horse's feet, coming down the road at a canter. They stopped suddenly, opposite the spot where he lay. Then they entered the grove that divided the road from the stream, and drew up at his side. A light form slid from the saddle and crouched at his side, and girlish eyes looked into his with a glad smile.

He was so abstracted that he did not heed her, until she sunk at his side, and clasping his arm with her hands, looked up into his face. Then he started violently.

"Florence!"

Instantly all the bright happiness died out of her face, to give place to pale anxiety.

"Fred, dear Fred, what is the matter?" she cried, earnestly.

A spasm of pain shot through his heart, as he turned away his face.

"Nothing, Florence—nothing," he said. He was thinking, "She will doubt me, like the rest."

"But, dear, there is—there must be," she persisted, in a tremulous voice.

She took hold of his other shoulder and drew him around, until she could look into his downcast, pain-distorted face. The haggard cheeks and hollow eyes, with dark rings about them, pierced her to the heart; and with her cheek against his arm and her tearful eyes reading his face, she panted:

"Tell me!—tell me!"

With infinite longing he gazed into the face that looked so lovingly, pleadingly into his. Then with a sudden burst he caught her to his heart.

"Florence," he cried, "do you love me—really—truly? Could nothing chill your affection—shake your confidence in me?"

"Fred, what a question!" she exclaimed in bewilderment.

"Do you trust me utterly?" he went on, with increasing heat. "Would you believe in me, though all the world should turn against me—father, sister, all? Could you stand by my side in prison—on the very scaffold—and while all around were hurling jeers of hatred and contempt at me, could you then place your hand in mine and say, 'I know that you are innocent! I love—I trust you more than ever?'"

"Fred! Fred!" she cried, clinging to him. "you are wild! Oh, tell me what terrible thing has happened!"

"Say!" he repeated, unconsciously shaking her in his excitement, "do you love me—trust me—like that?"

His passion calmed her. She saw that he was frantic for this assurance which he asked. And with heaving bosom, and face irradiated with such a love as only a woman can feel, she placed a hand on either shoulder, and holding him thus at arm's length, and gazing straight into his eyes, said:

"Frederick, I love you more than a sister, more than a father, more than a mother! I trust you as I trust my God!"

"If that be true, my darling, I will state that I am about to seek, I will state that I am his plighted wife. Loving him and trusting him without a shadow of reservation, it is my purpose to acquaint myself with the crime alleged against him and the evidence sustaining the charge, and then to proceed to clear him from the cloud of suspicion now hanging over him."

Careless, as ignorant, of his emotions, Florence Goldthorp entered the presence of the banker. He arose, and with a courtly grace that was a part of his nature, led her to a seat, greeting her with a surprised yet welcoming smile.

"Mr. Powell," she began, "I make no apology for calling upon you at this time and place with the business that calls me here, because I know that your interest in your son transcends that which you may feel in mere business engagements. I should shrink from opening so painful a subject as this must be to you, but that my interest in him is even greater than your own. To show that I have a right to know what I am about to seek, I will state that I am his plighted wife. Loving him and trusting him without a shadow of reservation, it is my purpose to acquaint myself with the crime alleged against him and the evidence sustaining the charge, and then to proceed to clear him from the cloud of suspicion now hanging over him."

There was a ring of confidence in her even, steady tones that thrilled Mr. Powell. But he saw in it the blind devotion of love, and would not let it avail against the convictions of judgment. More than that, she avowed herself ignorant even of the charge.

"Miss Goldthorp," he replied, in a feeling tone, "I am both pleased and pained at what you have said—pleased at the noble purpose that does your heart so much credit; pained—and you can conceive what it costs me, as a father, to say it—pained that such a love as yours should be thrown away upon so unworthy an object."

"I shall not now endeavor to combat your opinion, sir, though confident that it is fatally mistaken. My first aim is to ascertain what is alleged against your son. The subject was too painful for him, and he sent me to you."

"Miss Goldthorp, you will readily see that it can be scarcely less painful to me to go over this sad history. If you will not take it as a discourtesy, I would beg to refer you to Mr. Beaumont. He is wholly in my confidence in this matter; as thoroughly conversant with all the facts as myself; and, being less vitally interested, can lay them before you more coherently."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Powell," said Florence, with a sudden pallor of cheek and flash of eye; "I cannot explain at present, but I cannot meet Mr. Beaumont in this matter."

"I see, my poor girl, that Frederick has poisoned your mind against Mr. Beaumont; but I assure you he has acted, in everything, as a gentleman and as a friend to the best interests of my misguided son."

stands before us with the face of an angel of innocence, save for the pallor of confounded guilt! No flimsy evidence could convince him so positively."

"But he is only your grandfather, Frederick. He had not a woman's love and a woman's instincts to guide him. The evidence is false and must have some weak point. Trust me, my love will find it out. But though it be as inaccessible as the battlements of heaven, yet I will never be shaken by it. But tell me of what you are accused. I can bear it better from your lips."

"I cannot! I cannot! Go to my father. He will tell you all."

"But how was suspicion thrown upon you?"

"I do not know. But whatever be the plot,

"Spare me this discussion, Mr. Powell. Is there no one else to whom I may go for the facts and allegations?"

"At this moment, a firm step and the regular fall of a cane was heard in the outer room."

"Here is Mr. Carrington," said the banker; and as he entered, addressed him: "Father, you will bear with me if I shift a painful office to your shoulders. I am going out, and will leave you and this dear girl together. Tell her all that she wishes to know. You will excuse me, Miss Goldthorpe; I go to keep an appointment."

As the banker withdrew, Mr. Carrington laid aside his hat and cane, and seated himself on a sofa. Florence ran and sat down beside him. He removed her hat, and drawing her head to his shoulder and kissing her tenderly on the brow, he said, while he caressed her glossy hair with his hand:

"Well, what is it, my little girl? What do you wish to know?"

"Dear Mr. Carrington," said Florence, with tears in her eyes, "what dreadful suspicion is resting against Frederick?"

"You call him Frederick?" asked the old man, with a look of regret.

"He is my affianced husband," was the low reply.

He drew her closer, and patted her head with a fatherly caress that was like a benediction.

"This is a sad world we live in," he said, with tears in his eyes, and in a voice as gentle as a woman's. "How little we can read the future. How little we know how many hearts will be blighted by one act of sin."

"Don't! don't!" pleaded the girl, piteously. "I can't bear to hear you speak in that way. You are condemning him."

"Florence," said the old man, "I need not now tell you how I love you. Years and years ago, when your father was a lad, we played with the same ball, eat from the same dinner-baskets, and studied from the same books. The desire of our hearts was not carried out. Our blood was not destined to mingle in the first generation. My darling Martha and your father did not love each other, as we prayed that they might. Then my hopes centered in Martha's child and in you."

"I cannot express to you, my child, the joy of seeing the hope of a long life, once disappointed, at last approaching its fulfillment. With such emotions I noted the boy's growing embarrassment when alone in your presence, and the quick flush and pallor of your cheek, if by chance his hand unexpectedly touched yours. I prayed that you might love each other; I saw it approaching, day by day; and now, in the answer to my prayer I recognize the bitterest blow of all. I sought to bless Charles's grandchild; and in my blindness I prayed for what will prove a curse!"

With a tremulous cry, she put her hand on his lips.

"Stop! oh, stop!" she cried, wildly; for it seemed as if he were cursing her lover. "You do not know! He is innocent! Oh, believe me, he is innocent!"

"My poor, poor child—Charles's child! how my heart bleeds for you!" murmured the old man, tears trickling down his snowy beard and falling on her raven hair.

"Oh! will you not cease? Do not you see that you are tearing my heart by persisting in such inflexible condemnation? Tell me of what he is accused. He could not, he was so cut to the heart."

"You have seen him?"

"Yes; and so bowed to the earth beneath the load of injustice that even your cold judgment must have faltered."

"And he did not tell you his crime—may, crimes?"

"Stop! I will not listen to you!" she cried, with a burst of passionate indignation. "You speak of him as a criminal, guilty and already convicted of the act. I did not ask you for that. Tell me the accusation—nay, the lying, villainous calumny that has been brought against him; and reserve your judgment!"

"Did not he tell you the charges?" asked the old man, humoring her.

"No! I tell you he could not! He was wild with grief and despair! Your barbarity had crushed him!"

"The boy has some good in him. He could not bear to blast your happiness with his own lips—or was it that he dared not?"

His mind was not as flexible as a younger man's would have been. Conviction was rooted deep in his nature, and he could not open his mouth without condemning his grandson.

She stamped her foot in an ebullition of rage.

"Out upon you for a coward yourself! You profess to love me for the sake of my father and of my father's father, yet you mock my grief! It was by such cold, adamant prejudice that you goaded him to the verge of madness!"

Then she broke down and fell to weeping hysterically.

"Forgive me! forgive me, my child!" murmured the old man, gathering her to his breast again. "If I am hard upon him, it is because my love for him was so strong, and this terrible blow has cloven clear down to the quick. I have embarked all my hopes in a single ship, and I see it before me a total wreck. Loving him as I do, could I do him an injustice?"

"No, no; not wittingly. But you were blinded by appearances; you deemed him guilty; and would not listen to what he had to say."

"He was dumb. He could say nothing."

"Stunned by the bitterness of your denunciation. But the charges—what are they?"

"I cannot bring myself to wound you by the rehearsal of them."

"But do not you see that this suspense is killing me? I know that it is all a base fabrication—a conspiracy to ruin him. I will bring the facts to light, and drag the infamous perpetrators to punishment. Tell me of what he is accused. I entreat you!"

The old man shook his head in sorrow, as he yielded to her demand; and holding her hand in his, and regarding her with a look of almost infinite compassion, he said:

"First, of drunkenness!"

"Impossible!"

She started back with such a look of incredulity as Mary might have given, had she been told that the Son of God was an impostor.

her, she wrung her hands, and wept and moaned as if her heart would break.

"Forgive me, oh, my child!" said the old man. "I should not have yielded to you. I knew that you were not strong enough to bear it."

"No, no! I am strong—I will be strong! Tell me all!"

"My poor girl, do not pursue this further."

"I must! I will! I will know all! What next?—do you hear?—what next?"

"Gambling!" said the old man, in despair.

"Never! Never! It is a base, infamous lie!"

"He confessed it to his father!"

She looked at him in a deadly calm—a white horror that froze her face to marble. She could not doubt his veracity; she doubted the evidence of her senses.

"What?" she asked, in a hoarse whisper.

"He confessed it to his father!" repeated Mr. Carrington.

She said not a word. She sat rocking to and fro, staring dumbly, not at him, but away beyond him, into vacancy.

The old man was awed by her unutterable woe. He was terrified by the unnatural calm that was upon her. If she would weep and moan, it would relieve her. But this fearful tension—it could not last; she would go mad.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 271.)

Overland Kit:

OR,
THE IDYL OF WHITE PINE.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," "WOLF DEMON," "WHITE WITCH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE VIGILANTES.

For a few moments, there was silence in the entry-way. Bill almost fancied that he could hear the beating of his heart. As for the other two, they were too much absorbed in their common speculations as to the hand that had brought death to the drunken man to think of aught else.

Although they had not said so in words, yet both the Judge and Rennet felt sure that they could name the person who had struck the murderous blow, and that they both suspected the same person.

Bill felt as if he was under the influence of some horrid dream. He had guessed the thoughts of the others, and though he had fought manfully against it, yet the terrible suspicion had crept into his mind also. Bill could hardly believe that he was awake, and it was not until he had slyly bitten his little finger that he became convinced of the fact.

"Murder is not committed without a reason," the Judge said, slowly, after a long pause. "If Tendall had no open enemy—"

"Not one in the world!" exclaimed Rennet. "I am sure of it."

"There must have been a motive for his killing, and, although circumstances may point strongly to one party, unless we can prove that that party has some strong motive for the deed—some powerful reason to wish the murdered man out of the way—we shall find it difficult to fix the crime upon the person."

Even though, in our own minds, we may feel confident that we have put our hands upon the actual murderer," the Judge said, slowly and deliberately.

"I think that my evidence will furnish all the proof necessary to convict the murderer," Rennet replied.

"Indeed?" questioned the Judge, earnestly.

"Yes; some few days ago, while under the influence of liquor, Tendall uttered some careless words. At the time I paid but little attention to them; but, now, I feel sure that they will serve as a clue as to who and what his assassin is."

"And those words?"

"Had reference to the person who was paying him to keep his tongue still. I guessed at once who it was, and now, after the discovery that Bill and I made a little while ago, I feel sure that I can prove who it was that killed Tendall."

"I can hardly find it in my heart to admit this dreadful suspicion," Jones said, slowly.

"It is dreadful, but looks are sometimes deceptive. I think that if we proceed cautiously and promptly, we shall be able to find some other important proofs," Rennet observed.

"You think, then, that we had better act at once?"

"Yes," Rennet replied.

"Very well; I'll leave you in charge of the house and the body, while I go and rouse the citizens. We shall have to call upon the Vigilantes in this matter; Injun Dick and his friends will probably attempt to give us trouble. Now that we have got our hands in, we might as well rid Spur City of two or three bad characters, or else string 'em up at the end of a rope as a warning. I think that we had better not proceed to active measures until morning. Do you think that there is any danger of the party attempting to escape?"

"No," Rennet replied; "all is dark in the room—gone to bed, of course."

"Plucky, eh?"

"More bravado than any thing else."

"Well, you and Bill keep watch here. After day-break the Vigilantes will act. With this assurance, Judge Jones took his departure."

"I feel like a durned fool in this hyer matter," Bill blurted out. "I wish I'd druv' my coach back to Austen instead of lettin' him go in my place; but, I won't believe it; I earned ef I will."

"You'll find out before to-morrow night," Rennet said, dryly. Then he examined his watch. "Half after two; we shan't have a great while to wait until day-break. Suppose you go in the room there and bring out a couple of chairs."

"What, whar the dead man is?"

"Yes."

"No, I'm durned ef I do!" exclaimed Bill, with a shiver. "I ain't afraid of much in this world, but I don't go in thar ag'in till daylight, you bet!"

tion. Then the two sat down upon it and kept vigilant watch, though, as Bill observed, "twan't much use to watch a dead man, 'cos he wouldn't run away, nohow you could fix it."

Rennet did not take the trouble to inform the stage-driver that he was watching the living and not the dead.

The express office was dimly lit by a half a dozen candles, burning in the tin sconces attached to the walls.

The flickering light fell upon a half a dozen stern and resolute faces. The Vigilante leaders were gathered in council. Judge Jones sat at his desk; the others were seated around him. The most prominent men in Spur City were represented there.

Quietly they had assembled at the Judge's summons, roused from their slumbers by the call of duty.

The Judge made a short speech, recounting the full particulars of the murder of Gains Tendall, to which the others listened attentively.

"And now, fellow-citizens," said the Judge, after completing his recital, "I think that the time for action is come. I think that the strong right arm of justice should be felt by the rogues that harbor in our midst; it is time that they be taught a lesson. The Vigilantes must rise, take a hand in the game, and wipe out these scoundrels. Spur City needs purifying, fellow-citizens, and upon us devolves that duty. We must let the desperadoes in our midst understand that we are terribly in earnest. No child's-play now; no more black cloths, masks, and bug-a-boos stuff. Such fellows as this Dick Talbot laugh at it. You see that he has never heeded our menace at all. In fact, he defied our power by remaining. We don't want talk now, but work—short, sharp and decisive." Then the Judge sat down.

"But is there any reason, Judge, to connect Dick Talbot with this murder?" one of the committee asked.

"Well, no—not exactly," the Judge replied, slowly. "Still, as he is looked up to by a great many of these desperadoes as a sort of a leader, it would be as well to make an example of him and so strike terror into the rest."

"Yes; but, Judge, I don't see what excuse we have got for making an example out of Talbot," said another of the committee, Ben Haynes by name, who kept a general store next to the Eldorado.

"Well, only that he is the most conspicuous one of these roughs who are disgracing our town by their presence," Jones replied.

"It's true he don't work for a living and gets his bread by playing cards; there ain't any thing so very bad about that, anyway—at least, not out in this region. They say he always plays a fair, square game, and never takes advantage of any man. Of course the men who play with him intend to win his money if they can; and I don't think much of a man who sits down to play cards with a gambler, and then squeals because he loses his money."

"To judge from your words, Haynes, you think that this reckless desperado is rather an honor to our town than a disgrace," Jones said, tartly.

"No. I don't think any thing of the kind," Haynes replied, blunty. "but I don't believe in giving a dog a bad name and then hanging him right off. I go in for justice every time. I don't say but what our town would be better without Dick Talbot than with him; but, I ain't sure of it. I'm perfectly willing to ask him to leave town if the sentiment of our citizens is that way; but it ain't, and I know that it ain't. And I tell you, right out, fair and square, Judge, if we try to string Injun Dick up without reason, we'll have our hands full."

"I kinder think Haynes is right there," said another of the citizens.

"But if the evidence proved that Talbot had a hand in the murder of this miner, Tendall," asked the Judge.

"Why, then, we'll have a right to put him through," replied Haynes; "but I say, Judge, we'll give him a fair shake."

"Certainly; we will keep justice on our side," the Judge said, blandly.

"Be sure you're right, and then go ahead!" that's my motto!" exclaimed Haynes.

"Of course; unless we represent the whole of Spur City, our power amounts to but little. The people must be with us and not against us. The honest and peaceable citizens must feel that we are doing them a service in ridding our community of the desperate cases who have sought refuge here, or we shall be acting with our hands tied."

A murmur of assent told that this point was well taken. A course of action was soon resolved upon, and an hour after day-break fixed upon as the time of action.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE ARREST.

THE leaders of the Vigilantes dispersed to call out their friends. Bowie-knives and revolvers were in demand. The rising of the Vigilantes was something new for Spur City. The mining camp had never been "purified," to use the Western expression.

Dark forms flitted like spectral figures from shanty to shanty in the early morning gloom.

There is something irresistible in Judge Lynch's summons.

The first gray lights of the morning were beginning to appear above the horizon. The darker shades of night were flying fast before the coming of the day-god.

Judge Jones and two or three of the committee stood in front of the express office in busy consultation.

The programme was that the Vigilantes should not show their hands openly at first, but in case of an attempt by the rough element to obstruct the career of justice, to rise and make a terrible example of the ringleaders.

At last the Judge thought that the chances were in his favor. The discussion was ended that he had been taking an active part in, and he leaned back against the corner of the shanty.

The first light of the morning, struggling through the mist and vapor of the dying night, illuminated his iron-like face. A look of satisfaction gleamed in his cold eyes.

As he leaned carelessly against the corner of the building, his arms folded across his massive chest, and his eyes fixed on the peaks of the far-off Sierra, gleaming bluish-white in the misty light, he seemed more like the statue of an ancient Roman, fantastically robed in the garb of modern times, than a living, breathing pioneer of the great Western advance-guard of American civilization.

The lips of the Judge moved, though the sound of his words were inaudible to all save himself. He was musing half aloud—a sign of deep thought.

"He will be sure to make some demonstration when he learns who it is that is accused of

the murder of this miner. If he will only allow his passion to carry him away so as to defy our power—attempts to rescue the prisoner—excite a disturbance—do any thing to give me a chance at him, I ask for nothing better. If he will only put himself in the wrong, so that I can have an excuse to string him up to a pine, I'd give ten years of my life, and I am not as young as I once was. How lucky this affair is! The odds are ten to one that it will drive Dick Talbot from Spur City; then who can keep me from the prize I seek to win?"

A look of fierce exultation swept over the face of the Judge as he put the question to himself. Victory seemed almost within his grasp.

The Judge roused from his reverie by the sound of horses' hoofs. Three men came galloping up the street. The horsemen were the man-from-Red-Dog, the landlord of the Cosmopolitan, and Dave Reed.

The three pulled rein in front of the express office and dismounted.

"Say, Judge!" cried Brown, breathless, "we've corralled the critter!"

"Who?" asked Jones, in astonishment.

"Overland Kit!"

Each one of the little knot of men, grouped by the door of the shanty, started at this intelligence, and exclamations of astonishment rose in the air.

"You have captured Overland Kit?" the Judge asked, quickly.

"You bet!" replied the man-from-Red-Dog, in triumph.

"Where?" where?" questioned all, gathering around the three in eager excitement.

"Up in the mountains; but he's passed in his checks," Brown said.

"Dead!" The Spur-Cityites were disappointed.

"I reckon that thar ain't any more life in him than in a dead mule's tail," Jim observed.

"Tell us about it!" one of the citizens exclaimed.

Brown briefly recounted how they had discovered the body of the road-agent, covered with wounds, behind the massive boulder.

"Bore the marks of a desperate fight, eh?" Jones said.

"I reckon he did," Brown replied; "he was reg'larly chewed up."

Jones guessed at the truth in an instant. He remembered what the ruffian, Joe Rain, had said in regard to Overland Kit. It was plain to him that Kit had tracked Rain, had attempted to punish him for his treachery, but had perished in the struggle.

"We kivered the body up with rocks so as to keep the wolves from it, Judge; but the critters had commenced on the face afore we got there," Brown said.

"Well, I suppose that you may as well let it be just where it is," said Jones, after thinking for a moment.

"But, I say; what's 'billin,' anyway, fur to bring you out of your roost so early?" Brown asked.

"There has been a murder committed; we are going to arrest the criminal; and if there is any resistance made, the Vigilantes will probably take a hand in," Jones replied.

"Wal, I don't keer ef I jine in the funeral myself," the man-from-Red-Dog remarked, carelessly.

"Count me in, too," Brown said.

"And me; I go fur'er, every time!" Reed exclaimed; which remark, considering that the speaker had probably been in more "difficulties" than almost any other man in town, was something wonderful.

"Very well, gentlemen; we want all this good men in town; we may have to do a little cleaning out after we get our hands in," Jones said, dryly.

The approach of a force consisting of some fifteen men, marching up the street with military precision, put a stop to the conversation. The newcomers, all fully armed, were headed by Haynes.

"All ready, Judge, for a start," Haynes said, as he halted his men in front of the shanty.

"Life is short; we might as well be going," Jones remarked, putting himself at the head of the party.

Up the street went the squad, countermarching, and halted in front of the Eldorado. All within the hotel were apparently still asleep.

After deploying the squad so as to surround the building, Jones and Haynes entered the hotel. They ascended at once to the second floor. There they found Rennet and Bill seated on the box, keeping guard.

"Every thing all right?" the Judge asked.

"Ain't a mouse stirred," Bill replied.

"The party is still here, then?"

"Yes; there hasn't been a movement in the room," Rennet said, rising to his feet, an example which Bill followed.

"I suppose that we might as well make the arrest now as at any other time," the Judge observed, slowly. "It was plain that the duty was a disagreeable one, and that he hated to act in the premises."

"The sooner the better, I think," Rennet replied. "Justice shouldn't lag in a case of this sort. I think that the sooner we get the party out of this the better it will be, for, if the affair gets noised around, there may be a few, impelled by sympathy, who will interfere and make trouble."

"That is all provided for!" the Judge exclaimed, quickly. "I've got fifteen or twenty well-armed men down stairs; enough to frown down any attempt at a rescue."

"Arrest me! for what?" questioned the girl, in dismay.

"For murder."

Slowly and solemnly the Judge uttered the terrible words.

"Arrest me for murder?" Jinie exclaimed, as if she doubted the evidence of her ears.

"Yes; for the murder of Mr. Gains Tendall."

Jinnie turned and took up her hat from the table.

"I am ready to go with you," she said, simply.

"Mr. Haynes, take charge of the lady; I must look at the body," the Judge said. Then he took the candle and entered the room of the murdered man. Hardly had he entered the room, when a loud cry of astonishment summoned all to his side.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 264.)

PIMPLES, ERUPTIONS, ROUGH SKIN.

The system being put under the influence of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery for a few weeks, the skin becomes smooth, clear, soft and velvety, and being illuminated with the glow of perfect health from within, true beauty stands forth in all its glory. The effects of all medicines which operate upon the system through the medium of the blood are necessarily somewhat slow, no matter how good the remedy employed. While one to three bottles clear the skin of pimples, blotches, eruptions, yellow spots, comedones, or "grubs," a dozen may possibly be required to cure "acne cases," where the system is rotten with scrofulous or virulent blood poisons. The cure of all these diseases, however, from the common pimple to the worst scrofula, is with the use of this most potent agent, only a matter of time. Sold by dealers in medicines.

COVERED WITH ERUPTIONS. CURED.
CLAYTON, Columbia Co., N. Y.

Dr. R. V. PIERCE, Buffalo, N. Y.:
"Dear Sir—I am sixty years of age, and have been afflicted with Salt Rheum in the worst form for a great many years, until, accidentally, I saw one of your books, which described my case exactly. I bought your Golden Medical Discovery, and took two bottles and a half, and was entirely cured. From my shoulders to my hands I was entirely covered with eruptions, also on face and body. I was likewise afflicted with Rheumatism, so that I walked with great difficulty, and that is entirely cured. May God spare you a long life to remain a blessing to mankind. With unfeigned gratitude,"

MRS. A. W. WILLIAMS.

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A few Advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

Sports and Pastimes for 1875.

DIME

Base-Ball Player for 1875.

(FOURTEENTH ANNUAL EDITION.)

The long-established and accepted authority in Base-Ball circles on all Rules, Laws and Usages of the Game; and the STANDARD SOURCE OF REFERENCE for Averages, Club Reports, Professional Records, etc., containing a Brief History of Base-Ball, Rules for Forming Clubs, Instructions for Scoring the Game, Technical Terms used in the Game, Instructions for Managing a Club, Rules for Making out Averages, List of Professional Players, Noted Club Records for 1874, 4 Club Averages for 1874, and the new Code of Playing Rules for 1875. Edited by Henry Chadwick.

DIME

FATHER FOOTS THE BILL.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

Let folks delight
In envious spite
So would I have them do;
In dress and
I love to shine,
For 'tis my nature to.
Such goods I buy
As please my eye,
And, have the best, I will,
I do not care
How rich or rare,
For—father foots the bill!

When Tuesday comes
My kettledrums
Are very hard to beat,
None but the best
Do I request.
Because it is but meet,
Though poorer far
Than others are,
I strive to beat them still,
And very few
Can me outdo.
For—father foots the bill!

A coach and four
Stands at my door
E'er ready at my call,
And glad and gay
I speed away.
To opera or ball,
Where I outshine
The jeweled mine
Such rays my gems distill;
Others are laid
Far in the shade,
And, father foots the bill!

I almost worry,
I'm nearly sorry
To think of poor papa,
Who toils away
Both night and day
A-drudging at the law,
And he averts
Times can't be worse.
They're hard enough to kill,
And says it takes
More than he makes
For him to foot the bill.

Too sad, no doubt,
To think about
These things are unto me,
We can't abate
The ways of fate,
And so I let them be;
It is my doom
In gilded room
To live for pleasure still,
On fashion's throne
I sit alone,
And—father foots the bill.

LEAVES

From an Actor's Life;
OR,
Recollections of Plays and Players.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

I.—The Tremont Theater, Boston—The Rent Day—Douglas Jerrold—Mrs. George Barrett—102—H. J. Finn—The Property Man—The Secret Mine—Lifting a Super—A Practical Joke.

My recollection of a theater extends back to an early period of my existence. Indeed, my first remembrance is of a theater. I remember standing on the stage of the Tremont Theater in Boston, without any particular idea of what I was doing there, or how I got there, and gazing over the footlights at the sea of heads in the pit—this was before the *parquet* time, and the pit was the favorite resort of the men and boys—with a feeling of awe that made my backbone quiver irresistibly.

This was probably a slight touch of what is called "stage fright," but I never experienced it to any particular degree of inconvenience. I have heard the experience of several who have undergone this affliction, and it was vivid. I was inoculated in the drama at too early an age, I suppose, to catch this fever of a first appearance.

My instructions were to hold up my head and look at the actor who was in the play, my father; which instruction I followed with the precision of a raw recruit at a military drill.

The play, I remember, on this occasion, was the "Rent Day," which, as I afterward discovered, is an excellent domestic drama, by the celebrated Douglas Jerrold.

He was alive then; he is dead now. The last scene of the play had a feature in it that was peculiarly attractive to my youthful mind. It is where the bailiffs, in the act of "distraint for rent," seize upon the furniture, an old stuffed arm-chair—which had served for a seat for no end of generations of hard-working, honest farmers—being the particular object of their aggression.

A struggle always took place over the chair and one arm was broken, and from the fracture a stream of silver coins poured out upon the stage, rattling down with a merry jingle.

This was the dead grandfather's money, that nobody could ever discover, though it was suspected that he had hidden it away somewhere.

This discovery made everybody happy, and the bailiffs were hustled off the stage with scant ceremony. A fair-haired woman, with a voice that was as sweet as any music I ever heard, made a frantic rush for me, caught me in her arms and kissed me—a proceeding that used to frighten me at first, but I got used to it in time. Indeed, the older I grew the less this sort of thing frightened me!

This lady, as I learned afterward, was Mrs. George Barrett, unquestionably one of the best actresses the American stage has ever presented to the public.

I was supposed to be her infant son on that occasion. A score of years after, on the stage of another theater in that same city, I enacted Eugene De Lorne in her Margaret Elmore in the play of "Love's Sacrifice," and though she was verging upon sixty years of age, she could still present a youthful appearance behind the footlights, and the wonderful music of her sweet voice was unimpaired.

Whenever there were children required in the plays, I was always brought into requisition. My home then was in a large, old-fashioned house in Cook's Court—now Chapman Place—which was in the rear of the theater building, and I remember being awakened one night from a sound slumber, dressed hastily, and taken to the theater to personate the "curly-headed urchin," in a drama called "One Hundred and Two; or, the Veteran and his Progeny." This was a favorite afterpiece in those days, and the Veteran was personated by an actor named Finn, who was considered to be an excellent performer.

Some accident had rendered a change of the afterpiece necessary, and hence the unexpected call for me. Mr. Finn was a genial gentleman, and was very affable to me. Indeed, he appeared to be quite fond of the "curly-headed urchin"—my hair does not curl as much, nor is there as much of it, now, as there was then.

My recollection of this talented actor is very faint, as he died in my boyhood; but I had the pleasure of knowing two of his sons afterward, both of whom appeared to have inherited a liberal share of their father's talent. One of them, who bore the same name as his father,

H. J. Finn, acquired quite a reputation as a newspaper writer of popular literature.

Of course I had the free run of the theater, and with the investigating spirit of youth, I invaded all parts of it. But the property room was my chief attraction, and as I found favor in the eyes of the property man (his name was George Wall), I was permitted to visit it whenever my inclination prompted.

It was a wonder to me. The various and strange articles which were used in the different plays, and which are called "Properties"—it would puzzle an antiquarian to tell how the word first originated—were hung up, or scattered about, in the most delightful confusion.

There were shields, helmets, spears, battle-axes, swords, guns, pistols, daggers and all the paraphernalia of war. Throne-chairs, banners, palanquins, sedan-chairs, and canopies. Goblets and vases made of pasteboard, and covered with "Dutch metal" to represent gold and silver. Fruit-baskets, with imitation fruit that looked so real that I had to test it with fingers and teeth to satisfy myself that it was not so; I experienced a feeling of disappointment in the detection of the counterfeit. There were also imitation chickens, and pies, and loaves of bread, constructed with the same artistic skill. Bags marked "Gold," and filled with round pieces of tin and bits of broken crockery, as I discovered in a surreptitious manner. There were also long purses filled with glittering pieces of brass, that shone through the net-work in an enticing way. There were torches, that held a piece of sponge saturated with alcohol, lanterns, clubs of all sorts, masks of all kinds of faces, demon's heads and fairy wands.

But I could not begin to enumerate all the articles this wonderful room contained. It was a perfect curiosity-shop to me, and I was never tired of watching Mr. Wall while he constructed these wonderful articles.

He was a genius in his way. I remember him as a jolly, fat, little man, always in good humor.

He was very fond of a practical joke, and the supernumeraries were the objects upon whom he experimented, and he never missed a good opportunity.

I remember, one night, when the play was one of those old melodramas that are so seldom represented at the present time: "The

Strangely enough, Mr. Wall was killed by an explosion of fireworks at Laneragan and Sanderson's factory in East Cambridge; but I hardly think that it could be considered as a retribution upon him for his practical joke upon the poor super.

Carmela,
A CUBAN HEROINE.

BY GEO. L. AIKEN.

It was all like a dream to Hank Dockhorn, as he reclined beneath the shadows of a huge palm tree in the midst of a tropical grove of great beauty and luxuriance.

He had followed his nimble footed guide with such speed that he was glad to cast himself down for rest in the wild forest glade, when she announced that they were then beyond the reach of pursuit.

The resting-place was one of singular beauty, but the most attractive object in it was the strange girl, who had so unexpectedly liberated him from his bonds and conducted him in safety beyond the Spanish lines.

There is in Cuba a race of women of singular grace and beauty. Their forms are exquisitely proportioned, their hair is black as jet, and as glossy as satin, and very thick and long; their eyes are also black, with a diamond spark in the pupil, and their complexion is a ruddy brown, mellowed on either cheek by the warm blood showing blushing through the transparent skin.

This race is always lovely, beauty appearing to be its distinctive type. Its members are as characteristic in their traits that separate them from the Cubans of Spanish descent, or the mixed races of Indian and negro, as the Hebrews are from other nations.

No one knows the origin of this race; but they are supposed to be descendants of the people who dwelt upon this island when Columbus first visited it.

It was upon a girl of this race that Hank Dockhorn gazed, as he sat under the palm tree, and fanned himself with his broad brimmed hat, sat and gazed in open-eyed wonder.

He could hardly realize the situation. A short time previously he had lain, bound hand

and must die, he was conscious that, if he had his choice in the matter, he would much rather prefer to live.

The night's gloom fell oppressively upon Hank's spirits. That darkness would be dispelled by the sun's bright rays, and then would come another darkness—death's eternal night.

There was another light to come before the sun. The tropical moon arose in all its splendor; and only those who have seen the moon rise over Cuba's fair island can form any idea of the loveliness that her silver radiance imparts to the night.

A little aperture, about two feet square, in the side of the hut, served for a window, and through this the moon sent a stream of mellow light.

Hank Dockhorn lay and gazed upon it. The light exerted a soothing influence upon his oppressed spirit, but, suddenly, something without seemed to close the aperture.

"Hush! Are you there?" This question was asked with a strong Spanish accent, as if the speaker was not very familiar with English.

"Yes, I'm here, and I'm likely to stop here," answered Hank, with a grim facetiousness, which his critical situation could not suppress.

"Hush! I get you out—door locked—window do."

The next moment Hank saw a girl climbing through the window. He knew by her voice that she was of the softer sex, but he had no idea whether she was white, red, black or brown, for females of all those colors are to be found in Cuba.

Therefore, when she glided noiselessly through the window, and stood beside him, and the band of moonlight disclosed her form and features, a cry of astonishment burst from his lips.

"My eyes!" he exclaimed, "but you are a beauty!"

"Hush!" she cautioned him. "Soldier at door—be sleep—do not wake him."

She took a keen-bladed knife from her girdle, knelt down and cut the ropes that bound the prisoner's arms and legs.

Hank arose to his feet and stretched his limbs with a great sense of relief, when the girl said, in a whisper: "Now fly," pointing significantly to the window.

"Through there!" he questioned, dubiously,



He clasped the girl in his arms, and kissed her with great ardor.

Secret Mine." It was called, and it ended in a terrific explosion by which the mine is destroyed. I was dressed in Hindoo costume, and was supposed to be one of a persecuted tribe who dwelt in the mine.

Mr. Wall had to arrange this explosion, and apply the match at the proper time, and a crowd of warriors, women and children rushed down from the mine after the explosion, and a grand combat took place among the ruins.

There was a tall supernumerary among the warriors, a young fellow from some country town, who had come to Boston to gratify his desire to become an actor, and he commenced, very judiciously, at the foot of the ladder.

He was in the habit of remarking that he could astonish people if he "had a lift." This explosion pleased him greatly and he begged Mr. Wall to let him "touch it off." Wearied with his importunity, Mr. Wall consented, but bound him to secrecy. The super left the property-room in high glee.

Mr. Wall turned to me—only he and I were there—and winked hard at me with his left eye.

"Keep your eye on the cully, Poda, and you'll see fun," he said.

"I was always called 'Poda' in those days, though how I acquired that peculiar name is more than I can very well explain. I was mystified by these words, but I obeyed them faithfully.

I watched that tall super, without seeing anything funny, until the last scene came. Then I saw him behind the 'set pieces' that represented the rocky entrance to the mine. He held a light in his hand and he trembled with eagerness, waiting for the signal to 'touch it off.'

The signal came, he applied the light to the slow-match that led to the powder, but he did not retreat as Mr. Wall was in the habit of doing, not having been cautioned to do so, and when the explosion came he went with it.

I heard a despairing yell, I saw the form of a Hindoo warrior shot up amid the smoke and flame, with his arms and legs vibrating in the most eccentric manner, and then he went down with a crash amid the ruins.

A great round of applause from the audience testified their appreciation of this realistic effect.

They picked him up after the curtain fell, but he was more frightened than hurt. His hair and eyebrows were singed, but he experienced no other injury, more than a good shaking up.

"He's been wanting a lift, and I gave him one," said Mr. Wall, with a chuckle. "Didn't he look like a wind mill in a hard gale when he was going up, eh, Poda?"

I replied that I thought he did.

The super never came back to the theater after that night. This experience was too much for his histrionic aspirations.

and foot, in an old hut in the village of Mayari, under sentence of death.

Hank had made one of a party of adventurers who had enlisted in New York to fight for Cuba Libre.

The Junta had fitted out the expedition, which had made a successful landing on the coast of Cuba and the recruits had joined the liberating army.

After awhile Hank became attached to the band of Carlos Garcia, who made his headquarters in the mountains of Cubitos, and had won for himself by numerous daring exploits the title of the modern Robin Hood.

Garcia led his band against the village of Mayari, surprised the Spanish garrison there, and put it to flight. The victorious patriots loaded themselves with arms and provisions to carry to their mountain retreat.

As they were leaving the village, heavily laden, they were suddenly attacked by a force of nearly two hundred volunteers, commanded by Colonel Andren.

Several of the patriots fell at the first fire, their comrades dropped their booty and closed with the foe.

For a time the machete did good work, but the patriots were obliged to abandon the field before the superior number of their opponents.

Hank was cut off from the main body, and surrounded by a dozen volunteers. Being armed with a Winchester repeating-rifle, he made a good fight of it while his ammunition lasted. But when his last charge was expended they closed in upon him, a blow from a musket-butt stretched him upon the ground, and he was made prisoner.

He wondered that he was not killed outright, for he had killed two of his assailants and wounded three others before he was overpowered, but he soon learned from the jabbering of his captors, for he had picked up some little knowledge of Spanish during his sojourn upon the island, that they thought he was a leader of some note among the insurgents, and they wished to make an example of him by a public execution.

Lying in the corner of the hut, where he had been rudely cast, after his legs and arms had been securely pinioned with ropes, Hank Dockhorn had plenty of time for reflection.

He was a tall, broad-chested fellow, with a frank, full-bearded face, and as brave as he was good-natured; but he found the situation a trying one notwithstanding his flow of animal spirits.

He had been given to understand, and very plainly, too, by an officer of the volunteers, that at sunrise on the following morning he would be shot on the Plaza, as a warning to those malcontents in Mayari, who were supposed to aid and abet the cause of Cuba Libre.

Though Hank tried to make up his mind that

glancing at the hole in the wall. "Do you think I can squeeze through?"

"You must!" she answered, tersely.

"There's nothing like trying. Here goes!"

He clambered up to the aperture and contrived to squeeze himself through it, without raising an alarm. Then he crouched down in the shadow of the hut waiting for the girl to join him.

He waited for a moment only, for her lithe body passed through the window with the agility of a cat.

Then, whispering "Come!" she took him by the hand and led him by the rear of the hut toward a copse near at hand.

As they glided, rather than walked, toward the wood, he could hear the murmur of voices, and see the gleaming of camp-fires on either side of them.

It was not until they reached the green cover that he dared to draw even a long breath. Here they were in comparative safety, but she suddenly drew him quickly down. He obeyed the guidance of those flexible fingers, though wondering at the cause. But it was soon made known to him.

There came the tramping of horses, the rattling of saber scabbards, the jingling of spurs, and a mounted patrol went galloping by.

She waited until the sounds died away, and then she said: "Come!"

A broad band of moonlight stretched between their place of shelter and the deeper wood beyond. In crossing that lay the danger. She explained this to him.

"See, go this way," she said.

She went down upon her hands, and began to crawl like an animal across the open space.

"The cunning witch!" he exclaimed, admiringly, and followed her example.

But, though he followed her example he could by no means equal her speed in this method of locomotion. It proved a toilsome and awkward task. But the hope of life spurred him on.

She gained the wood before he was half-way across and stood in its dark shadows awaiting his coming.

If the patrol should return he was lost. The moments appeared as long as hours in that desperate strait.

But there is an end to everything, and Hank reached the wood and arose to his feet beneath its friendly shade with an immeasurable sense of relief.

"Phew!" he gasped. "That's the toughest crawl I ever undertook! Are we safe now?"

"Not yet. Long way to go—through the forest," she replied. "Come. I can guide you through the forest to the *lago*."

"A sugar-plantation, good! Go on. When it comes to progressing in man's natural attitude I think I can keep up with you."

Through the dark hours of the night she led him through jungles, over slippery rocks,

across brawling little streams, and through tangled vines, waving in fantastic festoons from the trunks and branches of tall trees.

And the rising sun still found them moving on; but when they reached that lovely glade in the forest she paused.

"Rest," she said. "You are out of danger here."

"I'm glad to hear you say so," he cried, as he removed his felt hat, and glanced admiringly at the girl as he did so. If he had thought her pretty by moonlight, he found that prettiness much enhanced by sunlight.

"Well, the sun has been up this hour, and I'm alive to see it," he continued. "Thanks to you, my dark-eyed, dark-skinned beauty. You'll never want a friend while Hank Dockhorn lives. And if you don't know what his friendship amounts to, ask any of the boys in the Sixth Ward, in New York, and they can tell you. Bless your dear heart, I feel as if I could take you in my arms and hug you for it."

And, suiting the action to the word, he clasped the girl in his arms, and kissed her with great ardor.

Taken utterly by surprise, the girl uttered a shrill cry, but the cry was scarcely one of alarm.

"Halt there!" exclaimed a voice in the distance.

Hank released the girl, as he saw a young man, in the characteristic dress of the Cuban planter, advancing through the grove, and swinging a light cane in his hand.

He came rapidly up to them.

"What, Hank! making love already?" he continued. "Are you going to take him for your sweetheart, Carmela?"

Hank started in astonishment at the new comer.

"What, Senor Amado?" he cried, in surprise.

"Faith, even I!" answered Amado, as he shook him warmly by the hand. "Does that surprise you? I was in Mayari, on business, when you were brought in a captive. I saw you though you did not see me. I dared not interfere in your behalf for fear of bringing suspicion upon myself, but I determined to save you, if I could. Carmela, who knows every foot of the country around here, undertook the task. I knew she had all a woman's skill, and more than a man's courage. She promised to bring you to me, and here you are. Thus I repay you for your kindness to a poor exile in New York. The death of an uncle has made me the proprietor of a rich sugar-plantation. It is near at hand. Come, you shall be my guest as long as you like, and then you can rejoin the patriots, or I will get you a passage to New York, if you prefer it."

"I do decidedly. I've had enough of glory. I've had a narrow escape. I may not be so lucky the next time," replied Hank. "There may not be another Carmela handy."

Hank Dockhorn enjoyed the hospitality of his friend, Louis Amado, for six months, and then he returned to New York to act as his agent in the sugar business.

But he took a wife with him when he went, and that wife was Carmela.

Beat Time's Notes.

A JEWELER who sold me a watch and warranted to give me good time, six years ago, says I misunderstood him, he guesses; he didn't intend the account to run as long as the watch.

THE hoe is one of the handiest things ever invented for hanging up on the fence. The handle of it is long and one of the very easiest things to let go of. How delightful it is to take the hoe out into the garden on a warm day and lay it down! What worlds of pure content does it bring to a man when it is lost! How pleasant it is to look at it in its idle moments! Take the hoe all in all, simple little implement that it is, I think it is one of the most useful things in the world to have nothing to do with. Heigh-ho!

I NEVER knew until lately how far the practice of fraud could be carried. At our boarding-house they use artificial butter with jute in it to represent real butter—the most disgraceful imposition a constant boarder ever had to bear. Then they have got to putting artificial flies in the syrup in hopes that we will think them natural ones and feel happy. When they got down to putting imitation roaches in the biscuit, I saw I was being made a dupe and left—my bill. I'd like to know what this world is coming to when they impose on a man in these ways.

I LOVE to sit down quietly and meditate (when I have got a good deal of work to do) upon the past, and as the old bygone days come traveling up, each with valise packed full of memories, every one which I look into is filled more or less with pumpkin pies. Oh, the pumpkin pies of my boyhood! how large they look to my sight, even from this distance! How I again see them arranged, row upon row, on the pantry shelves. No matter how high up, they were never so close to me, for I could get a pumpkin pie as easily as I could get a whipping. I used to get the whipping for desert. My gentle mother could always tell where the last pie missing went to by the outside layer on my boyhood's face; then she would layer slipper on my back, but I never could find an antidote for pumpkin pies. They are the sweetest memories of the past. Oh, that I had a shelf full now, so I might turn one of them upside down and upon it inscribe an ode that would bring ten dollars a line, with the pie thrown in.

My wife's grandfather was one of the greatest conversationalists of the age. He talked all the time; talked in his sleep; never could go to church, because he couldn't keep still; his tongue couldn't have kept still even if he had laid a brick on it. His wife used to put a plaster over her mouth to keep him quiet, but he'd talk it off in two minutes. He could talk a crowd out of a room inside of three minutes, and then follow them out talking, and talk them out of sight. He talked about everything, as well about what he didn't know as about what he did. It was pleasing to see him go into the weekly editor's office and talk to him about the pyramids, history of Rome and the art of cutting leaders out of exchanges so as to make them look like original. It always pleased the editor mightily to hear him—going down stairs; and if he slipped on the stairs he never stopped talking as he rolled down. If he could find no one else to talk to he always talked to himself. When a life-insurance man or a book-agent dropped in upon him they would be seen tearing out of there in an hour or two, perfectly demoralized, without having even stated the nature of their business. He was considered a master of the language. He finally talked himself to death—the first accident of this kind that ever happened. He was my wife's grandfather, and nothing more need be said. She inherits his virtues.